

# Bystander Intervention

## the 6 D approach

### What is it?

A bystander is basically a witness. They are the person or people who are around when harassment may be happening. Intervention is the process by which the bystander interrupts the exchange between the harasser and the target and ultimately positively changes the course of events that are happening. Bystander intervention is one of the best ways to interrupt the power dynamics that may be at play during harassment which makes it one of the strongest forms of sexual violence prevention.

### Detect

What are we looking for? Body language is often the first cue in noticing someone's discomfort. Things like grinding & groping on the dance floor can be totally normal between two consenting peeps, but not if it is unwanted. On the street, this might look like seeing someone walking quickly away from someone who is following them or turning their back to someone when they are waiting for the bus. There are so many potential situations that can be detected and recognizing a potentially harmful situation and taking action can positively influence the outcome and ensure that everyone gets home safe.



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### Direct

This method is the most straightforward way to intervene when practicing bystander intervention. It involves naming the behaviour and stating what needs to stop. It can also be useful when someone reports problematic behaviour to you.

This type of intervention requires you to be calm, assertive and confident in your message while also trying not to escalate the situation.

## Examples

"Hey, someone told me that you grabbed them on the dance floor and made them feel really uncomfortable. I am going to ask you to be mindful and make sure you get consent before you touch people, okay? If this happens again you will be asked to leave, do you understand?"

"Hey what you are doing isn't cool and you need to stop"

"I see what you are doing. you need to leave that person alone"

"If you don't stop right now i will go get security"



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### Distract

Creating a distraction is one way to interrupt the power imbalance when witnessing harassment. It involves approaching the individuals and asking questions or making a bit of a scene which creates an opportunity for the target to exit the situation. This might look like asking for the time or “accidentally” spilling your drink.

The purpose of this method is to interrupt harassment in a way that is maybe humourous or awkward. Pretending to trip, asking for directions, pretending like you know the target are all ways this can be done. Ideally, you want to engage directly with the person being targeted so that they use your distraction as a way to remove themselves from the situation.

### Delegate

If you do not feel comfortable intervening then delegating is a useful and equally helpful method of bystander intervention. It is okay to take care of yourself if you do not feel safe. find an opportunity to get someone else to get involved, whether this be a friend, the bartender or security guard at a gig. Telling someone is much better than letting it slide. it is much better to be cautious and incorrect about a situation than to ignore it and hope for the best.

#### Trust your gut

Seek assistance if you see something suspicious or off.



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### Delay

If you did not get a chance to intervene when you saw the harassment happening, you can delay leaving the situation until you've had a chance to check-in with the target. This can be so simple, yet have such a profound impact for the person who was experiencing the harassment. It validates their experience and provides them with support.

### Examples

You might say something like:

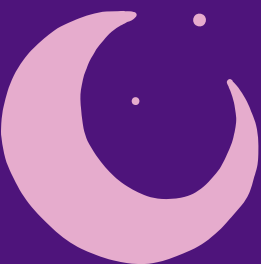
“Hey are you ok?”

“I saw what happened, do you want me to sit with you?”

“Hey, what just happened wasn't cool. Can I help you at all?”

### Dialogue

Continue to speak up and keep the dialogue open. Harassment can manifest as micro-aggressions that reinforce gender and racial stereotypes. Use your voice and continue the conversation about harassment with your friends and your community. You can use bystander intervention anywhere you may see harassment happening, at the bus stop, in the office, at the club, anywhere!!



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Acting as a bystander can make a profound difference in someone's experience of harassment

### DO:

- make your presence known
- take cues from the person being harassed
- Keep yourself safe

### DO NOT:

- do nothing
- escalate the situation
- call the police without the target's consent

