

LISTEN. BELIEVE. SUPPORT.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

How to Be A Positive Bystander

A positive bystander is someone who notices a potentially harmful or dangerous situation and intervenes. While it is only the responsibility of the perpetrator to not rape or sexually abuse people, bystanders can sometimes prevent harmful or dangerous situations from happening.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

A potentially harmful or dangerous situation has a number of warning signs you can look out for. If you're unsure if what you're seeing is harmful or dangerous, it is better to be safe than sorry.

It may be time to step in if:

- If a person appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol and is being talked to or touched by someone else inappropriately
- If a person looks uncomfortable or unsure in an interaction with someone
- If someone says something that is disrespectful or perpetuates harmful ideologies

HOW TO INTERVENE

There are 3 easy-to-remember ways to intervene in a potentially harmful or dangerous situation:

Distract

Approach the situation and create a distraction. This could be asking one person to come to the bathroom with you or starting up a conversation.

Delegate

If you don't feel like you are able to step in, find someone who can. This could be finding a friend who knows the people involved or contacting security or law enforcement.

Direct

Be direct. Approach the situation and address the issue. However, be careful to not create a hostile environment for the person who needs the intervention.

Being a positive bystander is about knowing when to speak up when others can't. If you're ever unsure, it's better to err on the side of safety.

NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT?

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center is here for you. Visit clevelandrapecrisis.org for information or to request a program or training for your group.