

**INFORMATION: BYSTANDER INTERVENTION
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT & SEX DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

What Can Bystanders Do?

From No More – Together We Can End Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

<http://nomore.org/>

<http://nomore.org/take-action/preventviolence/>

Everyone can play an active role in stopping domestic violence and sexual assault before it occurs by becoming an engaged bystander and helping to establish an environment where healthy and positive relationships are based on respect, safety, and equality. Moreover, taking steps to stop harassment or violence can make a significant difference in someone's life, and send a powerful message to the perpetrator and society as a whole about which social norms are acceptable and which are unacceptable.

SO, WHAT DOES AN ENGAGED BYSTANDER LOOK LIKE?

An engaged bystander is someone who intervenes when they see or hear [behaviors that promote, condone or encourage domestic or sexual violence](#). Intervening does NOT mean putting yourself in danger or increasing the risk to others. Safety is key in deciding when and how to respond to any type of violence. Intervening *can* mean disrupting the social norms that perpetuate domestic & sexual violence in our culture such as:

- glorifying abusive power over other men or women
- objectifying women
- demeaning men
- tolerating violence and aggression
- promoting male dominance and adults' misuse of power over children
- sexually abusive or physically violent hazing
- blaming victims for what happened to them

By disrupting or challenging these norms, you are acting as an engaged bystander and helping create a safer environment for everyone. If you see or hear something that does not feel right, speak up. If you do not feel safe, call the police or go to the authorities. Above all, trust your gut. A gut feeling can be your best guide if a situation just doesn't seem right.

If you see, hear or suspect that someone is in immediate danger call 911.

Resources:

From Step Up! Bystander Intervention Program

<http://stepupprogram.org/topics/relationship-abuse/>

<http://stepupprogram.org/topics/sexual-assault/>

From Men Can Stop Rape – Creating Cultures Free from Violence

<http://www.mencanstoprape.org/Theories-that-Shape-Our-Work/bystander-intervention.html>

From RAINN: Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network

<https://www.rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention/bystanders-can-help>

If you see someone in danger of being assaulted:

- Step in and offer assistance. Ask if the person needs help. NOTE: Before stepping in, make sure to evaluate the risk. If it means putting yourself in danger, call 911 instead.
- Don't leave. If you remain at the scene and are a witness, the perpetrator is less likely to do anything.
- If you know the perpetrator, tell the person you do not approve of their actions. Ask the person to leave the potential victim alone.

Be an ally:

- When you go to a party, go with a group of friends, Arrive together, check in with each other frequently and leave together.
- Have a buddy system. Don't be afraid to let a friend know if you are worried about her/his safety.
- If you see someone who is intoxicated, offer to call a cab.

If someone you know has been assaulted:

- Listen. Be there. Don't be judgmental.
- Be patient. Remember, it will take your friend some time to deal with the crime.
- Help to empower your friend or family member. Sexual assault is a crime that takes away an individual's power, it is important not to compound this experience by putting pressure on your friend or family member to do things that they are not ready to do yet.
- Encourage your friend to report the rape to law enforcement (call 911 in most areas). If your friend has questions about the criminal justice process, talking with someone on the National Sexual Assault Hotline, 1-800-656-HOPE can help.
- Let your friend know that professional help is available through the National Sexual Assault Hotline, 1-800-656-HOPE and the National Sexual Assault [Online Hotline](#).
- If your friend is willing to seek medical attention or report the assault, offer to accompany them wherever they need to go (hospital, police station, campus security, etc.)
- Encourage him or her to contact one of the hotlines, but realize that only your friend can make the decision to get help.

Get Involved:

- By speaking out and educating ourselves and others, we can help to decrease the number of sexual assaults.
- Become knowledgeable about the issue and share your knowledge with others. Start by signing up for RAINN's [monthly newsletter](#).
- [Volunteer for RAINN](#) or your local rape crisis center and help educate your community about preventing sexual violence.
- Create a conversation on social media and connect with RAINN on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Instagram](#).