

# **Bystander Intervention Information**

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*What you can do to help if you witness sexual misconduct, domestic or relationship abuse/violence and stalking occurring on-campus or elsewhere.*

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## **WHAT IS BYSTANDER INTERVENTION?**

Bystander Intervention is pro-social behavior using strategies and techniques to intervene in both emergency and non-emergency situations. Although pro-social behavior and bystander intervention can occur in everyday, public situations, please note that the focus of this information is primarily for you to help with other students and coworkers on-campus.

This Bystander Intervention information gives campus community members ideas and strategies that they can use in preventing sexual misconduct, abuse and violence, including naming and stopping situations that could lead to sexual violence before it happens, stepping in during an incident, and speaking out against ideas and behaviors that support sexual violence. It also gives individuals knowledge to be an effective and supportive ally to survivors after an assault has taken place. Research shows that this technique is a promising way to help prevent the widespread problem of sexual misconduct, abuse and violence across campuses and other communities.

NOTE: This information is not meant to cover all possible scenarios or variables nor is it meant to train you as a counselor.

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## **STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE HELPING**

### **EARLY Intervention**

Understand the importance of intervening early - before it becomes a problem, crisis or disaster.

### **EFFECTIVE Helping**

Develop specific helping skills and how to avoid harmful helping.

### **Emergency Helping – General Strategies**

**\*\* *Emergency situations unfold quickly and often require immediate helping responses.***

**Carefully assess the entire situation/circumstances before making any decisions or taking any action.  
Your own safety is the first priority!**

**Consider both DIRECT and INDIRECT ways to intervene.**

**Direct:** You take responsibility as the primary helper.

**Indirect:** You request that someone else take responsibility as the primary helper (e.g., the Police, Emergency Medical Trained or EMT personnel, etc.)

**Whatever response you choose, remember the following in an emergency/crisis:**

- Calm the person
  - Gather information
  - Look at options
  - Provide support
  - Do not become enmeshed
1. Look for the best exit strategies (*getting out of the situation*) for those involved.
  2. Be clear and direct with all of your requests.
  3. **Make safe choices**; consider the level of risk in choosing an action for intervening.
  4. Understand boundaries and limits - don't be a hero. Remember verbal fights can quickly turn into physical fights.  
**\*\*\* It is often better to WALK AWAY.**
  5. Intervene **early** – before a problem becomes a crisis or disaster.
  6. Choose the most **effective** ways of helping for that particular situation. Be sure to not make the situation escalate.
  7. Publicly state your commitment to helping – “*I will do X.*”
  8. Engage other bystanders – “*You do Y.*”
  9. Discuss consequences that the person cares about – Encourage VALUE BASED DECISIONS.
  10. **Call 9-1-1** if it is not safe or prudent for you to help directly.

**Non-Emergency Helping – General Strategies**

**\*\* Non-emergency situations unfold more slowly and allow more careful planning of a helping response.**

**Consider both DIRECT and INDIRECT ways to intervene.**

**Direct:** You speak with the person directly.

**Indirect:** Talk to another person who you feel could be helpful or give guidance and direction – community member, police, Dean of the Boston campus, Campus Safety etc.

***Note: If you do not act immediately, don't ignore the situation. Just because you don't act right then and there doesn't mean you can't do it later!***

**Whatever response you choose, remember the following:**

1. Consider *frequency, duration and intensity/severity* when evaluating a situation.

2. Determine the barrier for the person if possible – motivation, ability or environment.
3. Know your limits as a helper – engage others as necessary.
4. Be sensitive, understanding and non-judgmental.
5. Challenge misperceptions – Express your true feelings/beliefs.
6. Identify the red flags; Anticipate problems.
7. Determine the priority goal; formulate a plan; Prepare/Practice what you want to say.
8. Interrupt/distract/delay a situation you think might be problematic – before it becomes an emergency!
9. Set boundaries – do not make excuses for the person or otherwise enable them.
10. Conduct conversations in a safe environment. Maintain **mutual respect** and **mutual purpose**.
11. Remember the **Law of Delivery** – Who (person/s), What (content), When (timing), Where (location/privacy), Why (reasons) and How (tone).

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## SEXUAL ASSAULT

*There must be consent to engage in any  
and all sexual behaviors . . . .  
Consent is hearing the word “yes.”  
It is not the absence of hearing “no.”*

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*More than 90% of sexual assaults are committed by people the victim knew (dating partner, boyfriend, friend, classmate, etc.)*

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*Up to 75% of the physical and sexual assaults that occur on college campuses involve the abuse of alcohol by assailants, victims, or both.*

**It is very important that students and staff engage in appropriate sexual boundaries.**

**Speak up! and intervene in an effort to decrease the incidences of sexual assault within our campus and surrounding communities.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

1. Be aware of comments and behaviors from others that would indicate they were intent on having sexual intercourse even if the partner was unwilling.
2. Notice if someone is getting ready to have sexual intercourse with a partner who is incapacitated.
3. Don't pressure or encourage friends to drink or have sex as often or with as many people as possible.
4. Don't joke about sexual assault; comments and jokes that are meant to “ease the tension” or are “just kidding

around” can trivialize the severity of the behavior.

5. Know your level of comfort with conversations and talk about sexual behavior. If you find groups or individuals who talk about sexual relationships that are not in sync with how you feel, or the type of relationship you want, don't be afraid to state your position.
6. Many perpetrators are unaware that what they have done is a crime. (They may say, “Yeah, that was messed up, but it was fun.”) Let them know that what they did was not right and was against the law.

**If you become aware that a sexual assault has occurred or are told of an assault occurring:**

- Listen
- Be patient
  - Believe the person.
- Tell the victim it is not his or her fault.
- **Encourage the victim/survivor to report** (*to Campus Safety, Hamilton Police or local police, to the Dean of Students, to Human Resources – for staff, etc.*) **the sexual assault.** Realize however, there may be reasons that the person does NOT want to report. **Respect that decision.**
- Don't pry or try to get information out of the person if he/she is unwilling to be forthcoming with information...be ready to listen when the individual is ready to talk.
- If you learn of the perpetrators identity, don't suggest physical or any other form of retaliation.
- Know available resources (see below).

## RESOURCES

### Local

1. **Boston Police District B-2 Roxbury** – 617-343-4270 or **dial 9-1-1**
2. **Campus Safety** – 617- 427-7293 ext. 1646
3. **Dean of Students** - 978-646-4060 or ext. 4060
4. **Human Resources** (*for staff*) – 978-646-4052 Or ext. 4052 (Susan Arslanian, Director) or 978-646-4053 or ext. 4053 (Laura Bowerman, Asst. Director)
5. **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)** – ( 617) 492-8306
6. **Health & Education Services** – 978-921-1190 and **Rape Crisis Hotline** – **800-922-8772**

### National

- **One Student** – [www.onestudent.org](http://www.onestudent.org)
- **Green Dot** - [www.livethegreendot.com](http://www.livethegreendot.com)
- **The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)** – [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org) 1-800-656-HOPE

- **National Sexual Violence Resource Center** – [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org) 1-877-739-3895 (toll free)
- **Male Survivor** - [www.malesurvivor.org](http://www.malesurvivor.org) 1-800-738-4181
- **Men Can Stop Rape** - [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org)

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## DOMESTIC/RELATIONSHIP ABUSE/VIOLENCE

### CONSIDERATIONS/WARNING SIGNS

Domestic/Relationship Abuse/Violence is often very hard to identify. It can often follow learned behavior patterns that come from family, culture and media. *“That’s just how our (family or culture) acts,”* is a common excuse for perpetrators and victims in relationship violence. Also, many people never consider themselves abusive or abused, so they don’t recognize *“warning signs”* for abuse as having anything to do with their relationship. Talking about and identifying what a HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP looks like, helps in seeing the problems that may be in your own, or your group members’ relationship.

- 3 key relationship violence elements are: Intimidation, humiliation, and physical injury.
- Types of relationship violence include: physical abuse, verbal or emotional abuse, sexual abuse, stalking or cyber stalking\*, economic abuse or financial abuse or spiritual abuse.

*\* Experts agree the internet is increasingly the “weapon” of choice. It is a tool to exert power and fear and it’s more anonymous. The National Institute of Justice estimate a million Americans fall victim to cyber stalkers or stalkers each year.*

- Early relationship violence warning signs include: jealousy, attempts at monitoring activities, not respecting boundaries, possessiveness, threats of destruction of property, questioning beliefs and choices, and putting the person down.
- **Remember** – *“Checking-up”* on someone (control), is not the same thing as *“Checking-in”* (concern).
- Look for patterns – The Cycle of Abuse normally includes the following stages, which vary in time and intensity.
  1. Stage One – Honeymoon Phase
  2. Stage Two – Normal Phase
  3. Stage Three – Tension Building
  4. Stage Four – Explosion
- Do not automatically assume that the female is always the victim and the male is always the perpetrator.

### ACTION STEPS

1. If someone you know is being **cyber stalked** tell them:
  - a) Save all messages and call law-enforcement.
  - b) **Block** the user from your social networking page or from e-mailing you.
  - c) If the threats are on the stalker’s webpage, save the entire screen including the URL and print it. Bookmarking it is not enough.
  - d) **Don’t confront the stalker.** The situation could escalate.
  - e) Contact the social networking page in question. The company can take down the website and/or ban the stalker.

2. Be careful when adding names to email lists, giving real names in public forums, leaving social networking pages unrestricted or sharing passwords.
3. Encourage any person in an abusive relationship to seek professional help.
4. **Think about your own safety when you approach the situation.** You might want to have a friend with you for back up and help.
5. **If the violence is or gets physical, call 9-1-1 right away.**
6. Do not touch the individuals no matter how well you may know them.
7. Be aware of your tone of voice and volume. Stay calm.
8. Calmly attempt to separate the individuals without putting yourself in danger.
9. Be respectful of both individuals and their viewpoints. **Listen fully to the concerns.**

## RESOURCES

### Local

1. **Boston Police District B-2 Roxbury** – 617-343-4270 or
2. **Campus Safety** 617- 427-7293 ext. 1646 or **dial 9-1-1**
3. **Campus Safety** – 978-836-6798 or ext. 4180
4. **Dean of Students office:** 978-646-4060 or ext. 4060
5. **Human Resources** (for staff) – 978-646-4052 Or ext. 4052 (Susan Arslanian, Director) or 978-646-4053 or ext. 4053 (Laura Bowerman, Asst. Director)
6. **Healing Abuse Working For change (HAWC)** – [www.hawcdv.org](http://www.hawcdv.org),

**HAWC - 24-Hour Hotline: 800-547-1649**

### National

- **Green Dot** - [www.livethegreendot.com](http://www.livethegreendot.com)
- **Internet Keep Safe Coalition** - [www.ikeepsafe.org](http://www.ikeepsafe.org)
- **National Center for Victims of Crime** - [www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org)
- **Emerge Center Against Domestic Abuse** - 1-888-428-0101
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** - [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org) 1-800-799-7323
- **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence** - [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org) 1-800-799-7323
- **Domestic Abuse Intervention Project** - [www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)
- **Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men** - [www.noexcuse4abuse.org](http://www.noexcuse4abuse.org) 1-888-743-5754
- **Love Is Not Abuse** (Liz Claiborne Program) - [www.loveisnotabuse.com](http://www.loveisnotabuse.com)

## Violence Wheel – Power and Control



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### Five Step Model for

### Bystander Intervention (*Latane and Darley*)

*Notice the event*

*Interpret it as an emergency*

*Take Responsibility for acting*

*Decide How to Act*

*Choose to Act*