

## BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

A bystander is someone who is a witness to an event but is not directly involved. An **ACTIVE BYSTANDER** is a witness to behavior that is violent or unfair and speaks up against it. Being an active bystander means you are making a commitment to speak out against violence and make a difference.

What to do when you witness violence first hand – tips for intervening

- ✓ Approach everyone as a friend
- ✓ Do not be antagonistic
- ✓ Avoid using violence
- ✓ Be honest and direct whenever possible
- ✓ Recruit help if necessary
- ✓ Keep yourself safe
- ✓ If things get out of hand or become too serious, contact the police

Need a plan for intervening in a situation potentially involving sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or cyberstalking? Think about trying some of these approaches:

*Step in and separate the two people. Let them know your concerns and reasons for intervening. Be calm. Be a friend and let them know you are acting in their best interest. Make sure each person makes it home safe.*

*Use a distraction to redirect the focus somewhere else: “Hey, I need to talk to you.” “Hey, this place (party/scene/etc) is lame. Let’s go somewhere else.” De-escalate the situation to allow the other person a way to avoid the situation or provide them a way out.*

*Evaluate the situation and people involved to determine your best move. You could directly intervene yourself, or alert friends of each person to come in and help. If the person reacts badly, try a different approach.*

*Divert the attention of one person away from the other person. Have someone standing by to redirect the other person’s focus. Commit a party foul (i.e., spilling your drink) or pretend you are lost and need directions.*

Things you should be aware of in being an **ACTIVE BYSTANDER**:

**See violence for what it is** – A lot of times we don’t want to admit that violence is happening. We often choose to ignore the situation, look away, or call it something else. It is important to remember that no one has the right to be violent, even if two people are dating.

**Violence does not stop violence – use words!** If someone is being abusive, threatening or trying to fight the abusive person is only going to make the situation worse. Instead, ask questions like “Is everything okay?” while looking at BOTH people. It can be a way to interrupt the fight without causing more drama.

**Do not silence or ignore the victim** – Be sure that you do not put all the focus on the abuser. The victim’s voice should be heard and respected. Ignoring victims makes it seem like their feelings – and voice – do not matter.

**Most importantly – learn from the situation.** What could have been different? Did you respect the victim’s rights? Did you avoid violence? Talk to your peers and get their perspective on the situation.

***Keep in mind that violence does not end after one action.***

***If you are witnessing an emergency involving physical violence and/or someone in need of immediate medical attention***

## **CALL 911**

As an ACTIVE Bystander that witnesses something you feel may be sex discrimination or gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking you may wish to REPORT the incident to Campus Security and/or a campus Title IX Coordinator to seek further guidance and support for the victim. For incidents related to Windward Community College please contact:

Campus Security at (808) 235-7355

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For more information on Title IX please visit our campus webpage at:

[https://windward.hawaii.edu/Title IX/](https://windward.hawaii.edu/Title_IX/)