

A bystander is anyone who is a witness to an act or a situation but is not the person towards whom the act or situation is directed. The term refers to anyone who is in a position to intervene.

A **Bystander** chooses not to interrupt or intervene. There are several reasons why someone would choose not to do anything. This could be due to

1: Non-verbal cues:

Actions don't happen in a vacuum; actions contribute to a certain culture. Take note of how physical expressions, verbal expressions, and attitudes and beliefs contribute to an overall climate of respect or violence/aggression.

2: Indicators of discomfort:

How do you know when to act? Below are some signs that can indicate when someone seems uncomfortable in a situation, or is not consenting with what is going on.

- ▶ Body turned away from other person
- ▶ Not looking at the other person, but looking around the room, or at other people
- ▶ Crossed arms or otherwise closed off body language
- ▶ Giving the other person short replies or not engaging with them
- ▶ One person looking more intoxicated than the other

BD: Approach the person you are concerned about. Do anything to give that person a way out of the situation, if you have judged that they are looking for one. Ignore the initiator when appropriate. Alternately, approach the initiator. Use "I" statements: "I feel ___ when you ___. Please stop." Use humour when appropriate.

D: Find another person to intervene on your behalf. This may be a friend of the person you are concerned about, a supervisor, or someone responsible for an event.

D: Do anything that distracts those involved. Providing a three second window is often all that is needed to give someone a chance to get out of a situation.

Always try to act consensually, and always take your own safety into consideration. If you were unable to interrupt a situation, follow-up with the person you are concerned about if you can.



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