



## TITLE IX/SOPP BYSTANDER AWARENESS

Bystander engagement is highly encouraged through safe and positive intervention techniques and by empowering third-party intervention and prevention such as calling for help, identifying allies, and/or creating distractions.

### **Steps You Can Take to Prevent Sexual Assault/Violence.**

Everyone has a role to play in preventing sexual assault/violence. There are many different ways that you can step in or make a difference if you see someone at risk. This approach to preventing sexual assault/violence is referred to as "bystander intervention."

### **How can I play a role in preventing sexual assault/violence?**

The key to keeping your friends safe is learning how to intervene in a way that fits the situation and your comfort level. Having this knowledge on hand can give you the confidence to step in when something isn't right. Stepping in can make all the difference, but it should never put your own safety at risk.

A good friend knows how to CARE.

**C**reate a distraction

**A**sk directly

**R**efer to an authority

**E**nlist others

### **Create a distraction.**

Do what you can to interrupt the situation. A distraction can give the person at risk a chance to get to a safe place.

- Cut off the conversation with a diversion like, "Let's get pizza, I'm starving," or "This party is lame. Let's try somewhere else."
- Bring out fresh food or drinks and offer them to everyone at the party, including the people you are concerned about.
- Start an activity that draws other people in, like a game, a debate, or a dance party

### **Ask directly.**

- Talk directly to the person who might be in trouble.
- Ask questions like "Who did you come here with?" or "Would you like me to stay with you?"

### **Refer to an authority.**

Sometimes the safest way to intervene is to refer to a neutral party with the authority to change the situation, like an RA or security guard.

- Talk to a security guard, bartender, or another employee about your concerns. It's in their best interest to ensure that their patrons are safe, and they will usually be willing to step in.

- Don't hesitate to call 911 or Antioch College Public Safety at 937-776-0060 if you are concerned for someone else's safety.

### **Enlist others.**

It can be intimidating to approach a situation alone. Enlist another person to support you.

- Ask someone to come with you to approach the person at risk. When it comes to expressing concern, sometimes there is power in numbers.
- Ask someone to intervene in your place. For example, you could ask someone who knows the person at risk to escort them to the bathroom.
- Enlist the friend of the person you're concerned about "Your friend looks like they've had a lot to drink. Can you check on them?"

### **Your actions matter.**

Whether or not you were able to change the outcome, by stepping in you are helping to change the way people think about their role in preventing sexual assault/violence. If you suspect that someone you know has been sexually assaulted, there are steps you can take to support that person.

- Help Someone You Care About
- How to Respond to a Survivor

To speak with someone who is trained to help, call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673) or chat online at [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org).

### **Risk Reduction.**

Risk reduction tips can often take a victim-blaming tone, even unintentionally. With no intention to victim-blame, and with recognition that only those who commit sexual violence are responsible for those actions, these suggestions may nevertheless help you to reduce your risk experiencing a non-consensual sexual act. Here are suggestions to avoid committing a non-consensual sexual act are also offered:

- If you have limits, make them known as early as possible.
- Tell a sexual aggressor "NO" clearly and firmly.
- Try to remove yourself from the physical presence of a sexual aggressor.
- Find someone nearby and ask for help.
- Take affirmative responsibility for your alcohol intake/drug use and acknowledge that alcohol/drugs lower your sexual inhibitions and may make you vulnerable to someone who views a drunk or high person as a sexual opportunity.
- Take care of your friends and ask that they take care of you. A real friend will challenge you if you are about to make a mistake. Respect them when they do.

If you find yourself in the position of being the initiator of sexual behavior, you owe sexual respect to your potential partner. These suggestions may help you to reduce your risk for being accused of sexual misconduct:

- Clearly communicate your intentions to your sexual partner and give them a chance to clearly relate their intentions to you.
- Understand and respect personal boundaries.

- DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS about consent; about someone's sexual availability; about whether they are attracted to you; about how far you can go or about whether they are physically and/or mentally able to consent. If there are any questions or ambiguity then you DO NOT have consent.
- Mixed messages from your partner are a clear indication that you should stop, defuse any sexual tension and communicate better. You may be misreading them. They may not have figured out how far they want to go with you yet. You must respect the timeline for sexual behaviors with which they are comfortable.
- Don't take advantage of someone's drunkenness or drugged state, even if they did it to themselves.
- Realize that your potential partner could be intimidated by you, or fearful. You may have a power advantage simply because of your gender or size. Don't abuse that power.
- Understand that consent to some form of sexual behavior does not automatically imply consent to any other forms of sexual behavior.
- Silence and passivity cannot be interpreted as an indication of consent. Read your potential partner carefully, paying attention to verbal and non-verbal communication and body language.

### **In a Social Situation.**

While you can never completely protect yourself from sexual assault/violence, there are some things you can do to help reduce your risk of being assaulted in social situations.

- When you go to a social gathering, go with a group of friends. Arrive together, check in with each other throughout the evening, and leave together. Knowing where you are and who is around you may help you to find a way out of a bad situation.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel unsafe in any situation, go with your gut. If you see something suspicious, contact law enforcement immediately.
- Don't leave your drink unattended while talking, dancing, using the restroom, or making a phone call. If you've left your drink alone, just get a new one.
- Don't accept drinks from people you don't know or trust. If you choose to accept a drink, go with the person to the bar to order it, watch it being poured, and carry it yourself. At parties, don't drink from the punch bowls or other large, common open containers.
- Watch out for your friends, and vice versa. If a friend seems out of it, is way too intoxicated for the amount of alcohol they've had, or is acting out of character, get him or her to a safe place immediately.

**Source: Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)**