



## Effective Bystander Intervention Strategies

Many people aren't sure what to do when they witness instances of:

- gender or racial harassment,
- anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-trans, or homophobic attacks,
- or any other verbal, physical, or sexual aggression.

Here are some intervention strategies that can help you work through the challenging dynamics of a situation.

### Be Direct

- Talk directly to the person being harassed and let them know you're there for support.
- Ask the person being harassed what you can do to support them and then follow their lead.
- If it feels safe and possible, distract the harasser or tell them to stop; don't engage the harasser if you think it will escalate the situation.

### Go Covert

- Make your presence known; move closer to the person being harassed or make eye contact.
- Pretend you know the person being harassed or targeted; start talking to them, separate them from the harasser, or walk away with them.
- Create distance or a barrier between the harasser and the person being harassed.
- Get creative to find a way to interrupt or divert attention away.
- If it's safe, record the situation.

### Recruit Others

- Get other bystanders or your friends to notice what's happening.
- Find others nearby or who have a unique vantage point or authority to assist.
- Get others who may know the people involved or may be better positioned to assist.

### Now vs. Later

- Check in with the person being harassed to see what they might need.
- Ask them if they want help reporting the situation or if you should call the police.
- Remember...for some people and communities, the presence of police can create additional fear and cause further harm.

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