Contact Us

PAUSE Bystander Intervention Program
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YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

You have the right to:

- Say “No”, no matter what you’ve said or done before.
- Change your mind, even after you’ve said “Yes” and not be pressured or persuaded to continue.
- Decide what your own values are about sex and to make decisions about your own sexual experiences based on those values.
- Decide what your own boundaries are and have them respected by others.

You have the responsibility to:

- Respect “no means no” in all circumstances.
- Make sure your partner really wants to do the things you want to do.
- Check with the other person to ensure they are OK.
- Check with the other person’s decisions, boundaries and values.
- Make no assumptions:
  - If the other person is passed out or sleeping, they cannot consent
  - If someone isn’t saying “No” this doesn’t automatically mean “Yes”

Things to think about:

What are the costs/benefits of taking action?
Who else can help?
Do I see myself as part of the solution?

3. Determine how to help (and maintain personal safety)

Once you have made the decision to intervene, it is important to come up with an intervention strategy that is productive for the situation and ensures your safety, as well as for those involved. You can be creative in your approach; it does not always have to be confrontational. Try using a distraction or asking others to help you intervene.

Things to think about:

How can I keep myself safe?
What are my available options?
Do I see others as part of the solution?

4. Speak up and intervene!

Now that you have thought through your strategy, carry out your plan. After you have intervened, check in with the person needing help to make sure they are okay and they feel safe.

Things to think about:

Have I told everyone I need to about the problem?
Is everyone safe now?
How can I make sure the situation stays safe?
Positive bystanders are individuals who witness situations that could lead to violent or criminal events and choose to intervene to prevent the situation from continuing or escalating. The positive bystander model promotes the idea that everyone in the community has a role to play in preventing sexual violence. This model helps shift the responsibility for preventing sexual violence from the victim (or potential victim) to the person perpetrating the violence and the individuals who witness the behavior.

Here are steps you can take to practice PAUSE-itive bystander behavior.

1. **Recognize an event as inappropriate or sexually violent.**

   These behaviors range from sexist or derogatory language to trying to take an intoxicated person up to a bedroom. Other inappropriate or potentially sexually violent behaviors include intentionally trying to get someone else intoxicated or trying to take advantage of someone who is intoxicated.

   **Things to think about:**
   - Am I aware there is a problem or risky situation?
   - Do I recognize someone needs help?

2. **Assume personal responsibility.**

   Research shows that when more bystanders are present for an emergency or situation that could lead to a criminal event, bystanders are less likely to intervene. When more bystanders are present, individuals assume others will step in and intervene. You can make a real difference by assuming responsibility and stepping in to help the situation.
**Being a PAUSE-itive Bystander**

**SEE**
- **YOU HAVE TO NOTICE THE EVENT BEFORE YOU CAN HELP**
  This stage is important because it determines whether someone will get the help they need. Knowing the prevalence of sexual assault should make it easier to notice when suspicious behavior is occurring.

**THINK**
- **NEED TO DECIDE IF THE SITUATION WARRANTS ANY ATTENTION**
  At this stage, it is crucial for you to use your best judgement.

**ACT**
- **AT THIS POINT, YOU MUST TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SITUATION**
  In this stage, you will need to know how to distract, delegate, direct.

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**The 3D’s**

- **DIRECT** - Directly addressing the situation.
  For example, if someone is trying to take an intoxicated student to a room, you can directly intervene by taking the person aside and saying, “Hey man, she looks drunk. I do not think that’s a good idea.”

- **DISTRACT** - Making a simple (or elaborate) distraction to diffuse the situation.
  For example, if a couple is arguing and things are getting heated, you can call one of the person’s cellphone or you tell one of them that someone is outside urgently looking for him/her.

- **DELEGATE** - Finding someone else to address the concern.
  This is a good option if you do not feel safe directly intervening, you are not sure what to do, or you simply do not want to get directly involved. For example, if you are at a party and notice that an individual was drinking too much and has passed out. You see that the person’s breathing is irregular and the person is cold and clammy. You would stay with the person and delegate someone to call 911.