



## Five Steps Toward Taking Action

[www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)

1.

Notice the event along a continuum of actions.

2.

Consider whether the situation demands your action.

3.

Decide if you have a responsibility to act.

4.

Choose what form of assistance to use.

5.

Understand how to implement the choice safely.

# Bystanders Guide You Can Make a Difference!

Adapted from *Bringing in the Bystander* by Plante, Banyard, Moynihan, & Eckstein; University of New Hampshire, 2002

- Confront individuals and institutions that degrade or sexualize women and children. If it crosses that line, don't buy it, don't listen to it and don't support it.
- If someone blames the victim, remind him or her that no one deserves to be raped or abused. The only person to blame is the perpetrator.
- Write a letter to the editor if media coverage of sexual assault or domestic violence is sensationalistic, objectifying, or victim blaming.
- When you see harassment, intervene. It may feel scary or awkward. It also might change someone's life. Remember, silence is complicity.
- You may never have the opportunity to prevent an assault in progress. But you will have many opportunities to challenge the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to a culture where rape is allowed and often encouraged, so speak up.
- Acknowledge the influence of community and societal norms
- Recognize the need for individual and community training
- Celebrate the actions of bystanders
- Consent is key; educate on the difference between consent and compliance
- Bystanders make a difference before, during and after
- Before, by speaking up about verbal insults and crude jokes, prejudice and stereotypical putdowns made around the "water cooler"
- During, by assessing the situation, identifying the risks, taking appropriate action with appropriate safety precautions

*This document was compiled by HAVEN.*  
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- After, by contributing to support agencies that help victims, by participating in legislative activity to support victims, by staying involved and supportive. (Research shows that ongoing individual and community support has a powerful impact on the survivor's functioning success going forward)

## Bystander's Pledge

### I pledge to:

Express my outrage about rape and all forms of sexual violence.

Talk to other community members about sexual violence. Interrupt sexist jokes that objectify women and girls.

Seek information about why sexual violence is so prevalent in our society and how I can help prevent it.

Support and encourage men and women to take responsibility for ending sexual violence.

Listen to your friends and partner's fears and concerns for safety.

Pay attention to cries for help and take action.

Challenge images of violence against women in advertising and entertainment.

Support women and men working together to end sexual violence.

Nurture myself and be aware of my personal safety.

Believe and support women, children, and men who have experienced any form of sexual violence.

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