

Safety First – Bystander Intervention

Bystander intervention is one of the most effective ways to prevent sexual misconduct. An active bystander is someone who has the moral courage to find a way to safely intervene and stop a potentially dangerous situation.

Whether you see a friend who has had too much to drink, a classmate who seems sad and withdrawn, or a fight between two strangers in the quad, as a member of the Taft College community you have a role to play in creating a safe, healthy campus environment. This page will help you be better equipped to do that in a safe, effective way.

Remember: Safety is Your Top Priority

Before jumping into a potentially dangerous situation, be smart and think about your own safety.

Ask yourself these questions:

- How can I keep myself safe in this situation?
- What are all the options available?
- Who else might be able to assist me?

Aside from there being safety in numbers, you may have more influence on the situation when you work together with someone else or even several people.

Use the 3Ds

When making the choice to stand up for our community, you have options. The 3Ds are the toolbox of strategies you can use when making the choice to intervene. Saying no to violence is always the right decision and the 3Ds help you say no in a way that works best for you. The 3Ds are: Direct, Delegate, and Distract.

Direct

Directly address the situation. You can either confront the person being harmed or the person you think is about to cause harm. Some examples of a direct approach include:

- Asking someone who seems uncomfortable or unsure if they are ok.
- Pulling your friend away from someone who keeps pushing drinks on them.
- Telling your buddies that you think their joke about sexual assault is offensive.

Delegate

If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable stepping in yourself, getting someone to intervene for you who might be more equipped or better able to handle the situation. Some examples of delegating include:

- Asking your roommate to check on a friend who keeps missing class because they're closer with that person than you are.
- Alerting a Taft College employee when it looks like a verbal argument might turn physical.
- Calling the police if you hear someone screaming in distress.
- Alerting your coach that your teammate hasn't been acting like him or herself and you are worried.

Distract

Distracting means defusing a potentially negative situation by distracting those involved and interrupting the choice to engage in misconduct. Examples of distracting include:

- Breaking up a heated argument by pretending you lost your calculator and asking to borrow one from someone involved.

- Accidentally spilling a drink on the person who keeps forcing your drunk friend to dance with him or her.
- Asking the person who may be in trouble for directions.
- Telling the person who may be causing a problem their car is being towed.

These are just a few of the ways you can stand up and make a difference in your community.