

YOUNG MEN AND BOYS: BYSTANDER INTERVENTION GUIDE



YOUR MOVE: HOW TO CHALLENGE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

There are lots of ways that gender-based violence (GBV) can show up in your everyday life. It might look like someone making sexual comments about a girl, pressuring a person who's been drinking into a hookup, or sharing someone's nudes without their consent.

You may have heard or seen things like this before. This is GBV and you can help stop it.

GBV is harm directed at someone because of their gender, gender expression, or perceived gender. It can take many forms, like emotional, economic, physical or sexual abuse. Though GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, that doesn't mean boys and men don't also experience violence.

TIME TO LEAD

Small actions can make a huge difference. Challenging GBV can make things better for your community, family, friends, and for you. That doesn't mean it's always easy.

It's completely normal that speaking up can feel vulnerable. You might worry about ruining the vibe or becoming a target yourself. But acting doesn't just help others in the moment, it can lead to important change that helps everyone. How others respond may even surprise you.

TAKE ACTION YOUR WAY

Different situations call for different types of action, and you have a choice in how you respond. Here are some practical ways you can respond when you witness or become aware of harm.

5 WAYS YOU CAN RESPOND¹

Distract – Shift attention away from what's happening. This could mean changing the subject, spilling your drink, or interrupting to ask for directions in a public place.

Delegate – Ask another person for help. This could be somebody in an authority position, like a bus driver or store manager, or other bystanders or friends.

Document – Write down or record what's happening. You can then offer your notes to the person affected who can decide what to do next. Never post a video clip without the consent of the victim or survivor. The goal is to help the person obtain evidence.

Delay – Check in with the person after the incident. This could include asking if they're okay, listening to them, and acknowledging that what happened wasn't right.

Direct – Respond in a direct way, naming what's happening and confronting the person doing harm. This could be as simple as saying "That's not cool" or "Leave them alone." Keep it short, firm, and clear.

Regardless of what action you choose, **remember to keep yourself safe**. Intervention is not always the right choice. In any situation with someone acting violently or aggressively, only intervene if it is safe for you to do so.

Gender-based violence hurts everyone. You have the power to challenge it, reduce harm, and create a culture where everyone can thrive.

READY TO LEARN MORE?

VISIT

Canada.ca/ItsNotJust for tools, information, and support.

¹ <https://righttobe.org/guides/bystander-intervention-training/>