

Don't Let Small Problems Become Big

See Something. Do Something.

Bystander intervention is being a “Good Samaritan” for the people around you – being a proactive member of the community. It's looking out for others in order to reduce harm. Most of us already are bystanders - we either act or we stay silent.

Every semester Cal student bystanders do act – either directly or by getting others involved. We help prevent sexual assault by “checking in”, stop fights before they happen, save lives by calling 911 or cutting someone off who's had too much to drink, keep friends safe by walking them home, and reduce harassment by re-directing conversations and raising awareness and cultural sensitivity.

Why Take Time to Help?

We do it because it makes the party better and the community safer. It builds the kind of community which will aid you or someone you love when needed. Great thing is - you don't have to be a superhero. Usually just taking a few minutes of your time to check in and ask if everyone is alright makes a difference.

Is Intervening Difficult?

Recall a situation at a party where you thought about doing something – but chose not to? What happened and how did you feel about your choice? If this sounds familiar, you're part of a well-documented phenomenon that happens to all types of people called the “bystander effect” – people are more likely to help others if we're alone but less likely to help others when more people are around. Common barriers to action include:

- I wasn't sure it was a problem.
- Nobody else seemed to notice or react to the situation.
- I thought someone else would or should take care of it.
- I didn't want to embarrass myself or the other person.

There are no personal qualities that differentiate those who act from those who don't. There is, however, one thing that has been shown to combat diffusion of responsibility: knowledge of it and a personal commitment to overcome your own barriers to act. **Above all, try something. There's no single right or wrong way to step up.**

True Stories

At 2:30 Saturday night I had almost reached my apartment when I saw a young man stumbling and alone. I was tired and wanted to be in bed, but I decided to stop and investigate. I asked him how he was doing and he answered, “I'm great, I'm just trying to meet up with my friends.” Turns out his friends were back at his res hall about 5 blocks away. I decided to walk him home, because I knew that he would be safer with even one other person than walking home by himself. I did what I would hope

Even though it was a tough decision to make, this past year I had to call an ambulance for my best friend. It saved his/her life. It was a game day - which can get pretty intense - and we were pre-gaming. What I didn't know was that my friend had an unbalanced meal of Natty lights for breakfast. After a few hours of raging s/he disappeared. Another friend got me and led me upstairs to the room where he/she was lying on the floor, blue and unconscious. No one wanted to call 911 because they didn't want him/her or them to get caught for drinking, didn't want to pay the expenses, and didn't want his/her parents to find out. Despite the opposition I called 911. S/he was taken to the hospital then sent home to the parent's house nearby. I spoke to them the next day, and they were grateful that I called. The medics said that s/he easily could have died at that alcohol level had s/he not been sent to the hospital. Never be afraid to call for help. You could save a life.

Key Tips

PARTYGOER

- ✓ Be alert and notice risky behaviors and situations.
- ✓ Trust your gut – do something, even if pressured to stay uninvolved.
- ✓ Choose best approach (direct, distract, delegate, delayed)
- ✓ Engage others. Keep yourself safe.

PARTYTHROWER

- ✓ Have sober security in strategic places to be eyes and ears.
- ✓ Train security and alcohol servers to monitor and intervene for signs of over-intoxication.
- ✓ Empower guests to speak up if they see something risky.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to get help if trouble arises.

Intoxication Signs and Intervention Scale

Know the visible signs of intoxication and prevent others from reaching levels 4 or 5.

Level	Signs of Intoxication	Intervention Step	Say/Do
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed • Alert • Coordinated 	Monitor them	Reinforce plan and limits Encourage food and water Pace, space and count drinks Stick with low-alcohol content; avoid hard alcohol
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slurring • Swaying • Overly emotional 	Slow them down	Reinforce plans and limits Replace drinking with food and water Distract them – go dance, go to the bathroom, go look for a friend Tell them what you're seeing – "you're getting too drunk - heading past your limit"
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stumbling • Vomiting • Fading Attention 	Cut them off	Trust your gut – do something even if pressured to stay uninvolved Find friends or hosts to tell them & take responsibility - "No more for you, dude" Once cut off – don't let them talk their way back to another drink Give them water and distract them
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incoherent • Blank expression • Argumentative 	Get them home	Escort them out of event, to home or to safe space inside event Find friends to take responsibility for the person Stay with them Call police, if needed, before things escalate
5	Possible poisoning: Cold clammy bluish skin; Unconscious or unable to rouse, Slow irregular breathing; Puking repeatedly	Call for Medical Assistance	If you see any of signs of CUSP call 911. Get person in safe, separate space Put them in recovery position to prevent choking on vomit. Stay with the person. No food, drink or drugs if vomited in last three hours. Cooperate and assist paramedics and police with access and information. Ensure person has ID, phone, keys, cash and a friend to accompany them.

Concerned about a friend's ongoing use and harm?

If you're concerned about your, a friend's or a family member's ongoing use of alcohol or other drugs, use the Intervention Tips at <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/psafe#resources> to talk with them. You can also call the Tang Alcohol and Other Drug Specialist at 510-642-6074 to talk confidentially about what you are seeing or experiencing and may want to do.

For more information, contact partysafe@berkeley.edu or (510) 643-9073.