



Building a Culture of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion through...

LEARNING ABOUT BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

DID YOU KNOW?



Bystander intervention is responding to a potentially harmful or hurtful interaction in a way to positively influence the outcome. A bystander is someone who witnesses emergencies, criminal events, negative behavior, or situations where someone could potentially be hurt or offended.

CONTEXT:



When a behavior or discussion takes place that does not align with the organization's desired culture, a bystander who intervenes can diffuse a potentially harmful or dangerous situation and positively affect the outcome. In addition, not speaking up might signal to others that you condone the behavior. Examples of behaviors where intervening can make a difference include:

- Inappropriate jokes
- Microaggressions
- Biased comments
- Bullying or harassment

Bystander intervention, an increasingly popular component of anti-harassment and inclusion trainings, is an impactful way to intervene and support coworkers who may be experiencing sexual, racial, or other forms of harassment in the workplace, or biased or inappropriate comments. It's also an opportunity to demonstrate professional ways to promptly address what might be ever early signs of potential concerning behaviors.

Serving in the role of an active bystander does not mean employees must act alone in identifying and responding to inappropriate behaviors. In fact, not all employees will feel comfortable stepping forward to address other employees - and that's okay. There are a variety of actions employees can take:

- **Change or redirect the interaction:** Change the subject or offer a positive comment about someone to counter a negative remark. *"Why don't we shift our conversation to ..."*
- **Offer support after-the-fact:** Check-in with an employee who was the target of a concerning remark or behavior. *"I noticed an interaction today that may have made you or others uncomfortable and wanted to check in to see if you are doing ok"* and could suggest resources available to help them.
- **Directly address the situation:** *"Perhaps you aren't intending to offend anyone; however, what I just heard does not seem appropriate or consistent with our work values."*
- **Report the behavior:** Employees always have an opportunity to raise concerns to supervisors, managers, senior leaders, and HR professionals when they observe or hear behavior that is inappropriate. You can also ask HR for help and available support resources.

CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENTS:



1. How could you support a co-worker if you observed an interaction that was hurtful and needed intervention?
2. What action do you feel motivated to take based on what you learned?
3. What other ideas or thoughts come to mind?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:



- <https://care.uci.edu/events/green-dot-bystander-training.html>
- <https://care.uci.edu/>
- <https://liferesources.uci.edu/>
- <https://www.policies.uci.edu/policies/procs/700-18.php#sectiong>
- <https://www.policies.uci.edu/policies/procs/700-17.php>
- <https://www.oeod.uci.edu/sho/index.php>