

# BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER

**BREAK the SILENCE**  
on **GENDER-BASED HARASSEMENT,**  
**BULLYING, and VIOLENCE**

## WHAT IS A BYSTANDER?

A bystander is someone who recognizes when violence is occurring but does not intervene.

Being More Than a Bystander means:

- Taking action to confront harassment, racism, bullying, gender-based violence, and abuse
- Creating safe, respectful environments
- Being a leader and taking action to change the unsafe situation
- Doing something when you see or hear something disrespectful
- It's NOT ONLY about stepping in when there is severe violence (physical or sexual assault).

We can also Be More Than a Bystander when people say or do things like...

- Make inappropriate jokes
- Make others feel uncomfortable
- Harassing or belittling behaviour

## SAFETY FIRST

Safety is an important part of bystander intervention. You don't want to intervene at the expense of your safety, or anyone's safety

- It is NOT a superhero approach. We do not want you to jump in and confront them if the situation is unsafe
- There are many ways that you can Be More Than a Bystander while still keeping yourself safe

## NON-VERBAL INTERVENTIONS

- Refuse to join in with sexist, racist, homophobic "jokes"
- Offer your presence, as a way of supporting the person who the behaviour is directed towards
- Remember: if there's a threat of immediate danger, you should call 911 or call someone else for help. It's still a way of Being More Than a Bystander, and will help keep everyone safe

## VERBAL INTERVENTIONS – If you DON'T know them

- Intervene by creating a distraction. If you witness a person being harassed/abused, you could ask the perpetrator for the time or directions, or ask a question about a job task
- Vocalize your support as intervention. If a person is being harassed/abused in a group, say something in support, like: "Hey man, leave them alone" or "I don't like how you are treating them, stop it"



Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement.

BC Tradeswomen SOCIETY



- Discourage others from participating
- Say something like: “your words/actions are uncalled for, what you’re saying/doing is wrong”
- Get other bystanders to join you in voicing disapproval. Remember - by being silent, you’re saying that this action/behaviour/attitude/word is alright with you

### VERBAL INTERVENTIONS – If you DO know them

- It’s best to talk to the perpetrator when they’re alone, calm, and when you can speak openly (without being interrupted)
- Tell them you are talking to them because you care about them, and are concerned about what’s happening
- You can say something like, “something seems to be going on with you and I’m worried– can I help?”
  - Directly tell them what behaviour you are concerned about. (Make sure that they know that their actions/words are a kind of violence, and need to stop)
  - Don’t judge them, but also don’t validate any excuses or justifications they may have. (There is no justification or excuse for violence or abuse!)
- Your goal here is to help them acknowledge that what they are doing is not acceptable, and to help them make sure it doesn’t happen again
- You can say something like: “your actions/words make me afraid that you may seriously hurt someone if you don’t find a way to deal with your problems”
- After you’ve addressed what they did or said, tell them some ways that they can get help with their abusive behavior. You could also suggest that they see a professional counsellor

### HELP IS AVAILABLE

- **Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC):** If you or someone you know is experiencing violence and need help, please visit EVA BC’s website for a list of service providers in BC. <http://endingviolence.org/need-help/>
- **VictimLink BC:** A toll-free, confidential, multilingual telephone service available across BC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It provides information and referral services to all victims of crime and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence.  
**Phone: 1-800-563-0808; Website: [www.victimlinkbc.ca](http://www.victimlinkbc.ca)**
- **Worksafe BC:** Information about health and safety issues in the workplace, including a Prevention Information Line that can offer support on how to report an unsafe workplace.  
**Phone: 1-888-621-7233; Website: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/contact-us/departments-and-services/health-safety-prevention>**

### BC CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN THE TRADES

BC Centre for Women in the Trades (BCCWIT) provides programs and services for women and industry to support the retention and advancement of women in the trades, and works to eliminate the barriers faced by women in the trades by building a network committed to creating a culture of equality and equal opportunity. Initiatives include: outreach and mentoring for women in the trades; development of a central database for BC women in the trades; development and delivery of the Be More Than A Bystander program for men in the industry; and outreach and support for employers, contractors, union, and non-union organizations to facilitate the retention and advancement of women, including leadership training. <https://www.bccwitt.ca/>