

## **Promoting Active Bystander Intervention to Foster Health and Social Justice on Campus: Theory, Research and Skills**

**Thursday AM  
Overview of Theory and Skills**

**Alan Berkowitz  
Nebraska Collegiate Consortium  
August 15-16, 2013  
University of Nebraska**

## **AM Agenda – Part 1**

- Overview of active and passive bystander behavior
- Bystander Intervention Research and theory
- Social norms and bystander behavior
- Spirituality and bystander behavior

## **What is the greatest asset of your campus community?**

The values and ideals of its members

Most people care and want to do what is right

Most people are uncomfortable with unwanted behaviors and social injustice

Our goal is to focus on the positive in order to transform the negative

**Unwanted behaviors and social injustice can be reduced or prevented by active bystanders**

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## **Bystanders can make a difference**

- A passive bystander is someone who “stands by” and does not do anything when they notice a problematic situation or behavior even though they may find the behavior to be problematic.
- For almost all health and social justice problems there are bystanders
- Bystanders who act have the ability to create an inhospitable climate for risk behaviors and their perpetrators and to intervene to prevent harm

## **Bystander Intervention Contexts**

- To prevent a sexual assault
- To notice signs of suicidal behavior and intervene
- To prevent alcohol-related harm
- To prevent mistreatment and injustice
- To interrupt inappropriate remarks and behaviors
- To foster ethical behavior
- To change the culture that allows these and other behaviors to occur

### Key Points

- Bystanders are in a position to actively intervene to prevent unwanted behaviors and shift the climate that permits them
- Individuals can be taught to overcome their inhibitions to intervene and learn skills to do so effectively
- Most people underestimate the willingness of their peers to “be part of the solution”

**Think of a time when you were a bystander and wanted to intervene but didn't**

### What We Know

- Most of the studies and evidence for the social norms approach relate to substance abuse prevention and is very strong. For violence prevention the social norms approach is a promising practice.
- Most of the studies and evidence for bystander intervention relate to sexual assault prevention and is a promising practice. There are few applications to substance abuse prevention.

### Levels of Bystander Behavior

- To an individual
- To a group
- To a system or institution

### Stages of Bystander Behavior

- Notice the event
- Interpret it as a problem
- Feel responsible for dealing with it
- Have the necessary skills to act

### Reasons for Being a Passive Bystander

- Assume that it isn't a problem because others don't intervene (social influence)
- Fear of embarrassment (audience inhibition)
- Assume that someone else will do something (diffusion of responsibility)
- Believe that others' aren't bothered (social norms)
- Fear of retaliation or negative outcomes

**The presence of other's can serve to inhibit or support the desire to intervene**

**Social Norms**

- “Social norms” refer to the acceptability of an action or belief
- Are unspoken rules about what is “normal” for that group or setting
- Perceptions of social norms predict what people say and do

**Norm Misperceptions and Alcohol Use**

- Perceptions of what others do are strongly correlated with behavior and predict later behavior
- Abusers over-perceive use the most and use this to justify their behavior
- Interventions to correct misperceptions with individuals, groups, and communities have been successful in reducing use and abuse

**Social Norms: Underlying Beliefs**

- **Pluralistic Ignorance:** the incorrect belief that one's private attitudes, judgments or behavior are different from others
- **False Consensus:** the incorrect belief that one represents the majority when one is actually a minority

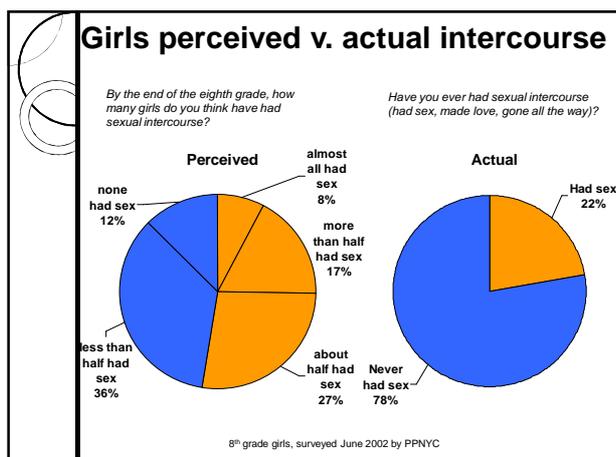
**Misperceptions Influence Behavior**

- Men and women over-estimate others' negative behaviors and under-estimate positive behaviors.
- Women and men under-estimate others' willingness to intervene, discomfort with risk behaviors, sympathy for victims, respect for someone who intervenes, etc.
- Do leaders use language that reinforces or corrects the misperception?
- Research has documented that misperceptions occur and influence behavior at colleges, universities, communities and the military, in numerous countries and for a multiplicity of issues.

**College Men's Attitudes about Rape  
Florida State University**

	% who disagree	
	Actual Norm (Self)	Perceived Norm (Most guys)
It is only women who dress suggestively that are raped	79%	44%
If a woman is willing to go home with a man consent to have sex is implied	73%	35%
A lot of women lead a guy on and then cry rape	61%	45%

Florida State University Sexual Violence Prevention Survey



### Misperceptions and Bystander Behavior

- Individuals are bothered by problem behaviors but underestimate other's discomfort with them and desire to have someone intervene
- Intervention is more likely when others are perceived as willing to intervene
- Problem individuals use the misperception to justify their behavior

### Bystander Norms

- Over 90% of students say that it is their duty to stop another student from harm.
- Over 90% of students would intervene when they see a guy they know leading a drunk woman who they do not know away in order to have sex
- 97% of college men witnessing "someone 'hitting on a woman I know'", say that they "would do something to help her"
- But only 19% intervened when witnessing a situation in which it looked like a female would be taken advantage of (last 12 months)

Campus data and Florida State University Sexual Violence Prevention Survey

### False Consensus Norms

Individuals who engage in problem behavior overestimate other's support for their attitudes and actions, i.e.

- Perpetrators of domestic violence
- Men who sexually assault
- Problem drinkers
- Gamblers
- People who engage in risk behaviors

Perpetrator overestimations predict problem behavior.

A false consensus norm constitutes a "self-serving bias"

### Conclusion

Underestimating other's concern results in less chance of intervening on the part of bystanders  
*(pluralistic ignorance)*

Overestimating other's comfort with problem behavior results in more chance of problem behavior  
*(false consensus)*

### Intention to Act versus Action

- Perceptions strongly predict desire and willingness to intervene
- Perceptions do not predict actual intervention.
- Why the gap?
  - non-salient norms?
  - methodological and measurement issues?
  - BI requires a higher threshold
  - how to remove the barriers?

## Spirituality and Bystander Behavior

- There are ethical and moral reasons for intervening
- Most religious and spiritual traditions suggest that we have a responsibility to intervene
- There is something within us that knows right from wrong

## Focusing on the Inner as a Social Norms Intervention

“Expansion of consciousness through inner transformation thus serves as another tool in helping the individual overcome the negative influence of the misperception, allowing the individual to act correctly in spite of what they believe others may think.”

*Beatriz Berkowitz:*

*“Social Norms, Values and Spirituality”*

*Chapter 8 in “A Grassroots Social Norms Toolkit”*

## Bystander behavior and leadership:

### The Role of Environment

- Environmental factors inhibit or permit problem behaviors
- Leadership is an important environmental factor
- Do you and your other leaders set a climate that serves to inhibit problems and encourage students to seek help?
- Are bystanders expected to intervene?
- Is positive behavior rewarded and reinforced?
- Are you perceived as accessible and sympathetic to individuals who might have something to report?
- Are your efforts reactive or proactive?

### What is Leadership?

- Risk behaviors take place in an environment that either encourages (dis-inhibits) or discourages (inhibits) them
- Leaders have an important role in shaping the environment
- Visible events send cues as to whether a behavior is tolerated or not
- Leaders are “visible events”

### Do you?

- Notice the risk behavior?
- Interpret it as a problem?
- Feel responsible for dealing with it?
- Have the necessary skills to act?

(Stages of Bystander Behavior)

## A Leader is a “Visible Event”

Visible events over-ride invisible events

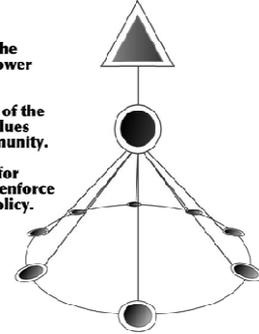
- Do leaders make sure that problems and resources are known?
- Do leaders talk about their expectations for:
  - Reporting problems
  - Attitudes towards those who report
  - Bystanders who have the opportunity to intervene
- Do leaders know about and reward positive behavior when it occurs?

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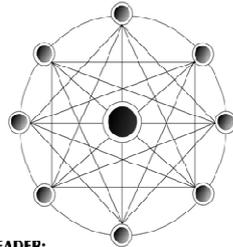
## LEADERSHIP BASED ON AUTHORITY

The LEADER:

- is an agent of the institutional power structure.
- is the enforcer of the institution's values upon the community.
- is responsible for intervening to enforce institutional policy.



## LEADERSHIP BY CONSENSUS



The LEADER:

- is a facilitator/mediator of the community's values for itself.
- builds a “web of relationships”.
- is not “above” but “within” the community.
- identifies and conveys community's true norms.

© Alan Berkowitz 2007

## Social Norms and Leadership

- Leaders underestimate others' discomfort and desire to have them intervene
- Leaders are often “carriers of the misperception” and thereby contribute to the problems they are responsible for solving
- Leaders can serve to inhibit and reduce problems and their causes

## What do I want for my campus?

- People are more likely to intervene when they know that other people also want to intervene and will support them if they do.
- We can create a campus culture in which people feel supported to behave in compassionate and caring ways in response to unwanted behaviors and injustice.

## Citation Information

The material in this presentation is from:

“RESPONSE ABILITY: The Complete Guide to Bystander Behavior” available from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)

“A Grassroots Guide to Fostering Healthy Norms to Reduce Violence in Our Communities: A Social Norms Toolkit”



**Thank you for your  
willingness to lead by  
expressing values in action**



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**Promoting Active Bystander Intervention to Foster Health and Social Justice on Campus: Theory, Research and Skills**

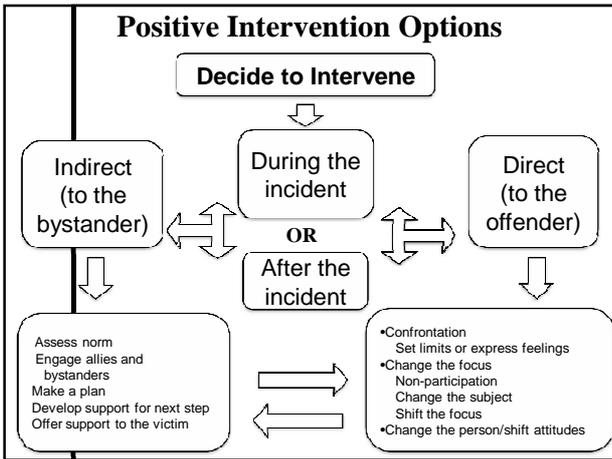
**Thursday AM – Part 2  
Active Bystander Intervention Skills**

**Alan Berkowitz**  
**Nebraska Collegiate Consortium**  
**August 15-16, 2013**  
**University of Nebraska**

### Intervention Options

- Direct versus Indirect: Talk to the person directly or to the others who are present
- On the spot or later: Do something right away or wait
- Types of interventions
  - Confront the person/impose consequences, express feelings
  - Shift the focus (change the situation)
  - Shift the person (change the person)

*Goal: To have more options for responding and feel better about your response*



### Ingredients for a Successful Intervention

- There is a context or relationship that allows you to intervene
- You see something you feel needs to be addressed
- You are involved in the situation in some way
- You are willing to bring about change

### Different Situations May Require a Different Type of Intervention

- With peers
- With subordinates
- With superiors
- On or off campus
- Student or staff/faculty

*Intervention is situation-specific*

### Confrontation

Make it clear that certain behaviors and remarks are not appropriate and will not be tolerated

and/or

Forcefully tell the other person how you feel about their actions

### **Shifting the Focus (Changing the Situation)**

- Non-participation
- Deflection (change the subject)
- Shift the focus (address the underlying assumption)

### **Options for Intervening with Superiors and Others**

- Enabling, colluding, joining (encourages the behavior)
- Non-participation- avoid the subject/incident or ignore
- Respond to the remark gently and indirectly by “shifting the focus”
- Talk to someone else about the situation

### **Changing the Person (“Shifting Attitudes”)**

- Is non-confrontational
- Uses “open conversation”
- Identifies the “ouch”
- Helps the person understand *why* the behavior is problematic
- Fosters deeper change

([www.ncbi.org](http://www.ncbi.org))

### **Citation Information**

The material in this presentation is from my book, “RESPONSE ABILITY: The Complete Guide to Bystander Behavior” available from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)

For video clips of bystander intervention scenarios and strategies go to: [www.alanberkowitz.com](http://www.alanberkowitz.com) and click on “video” tab.

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**Promoting Active Bystander Intervention to Foster Health and Social Justice on Campus: Theory, Research and Skills**

**Thursday PM  
Practice of Active Intervention Skills**

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Nebraska Collegiate Consortium  
August 15-16, 2013  
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**Afternoon Outline**

- Questions, discussion from AM
- Practice of bystander intervention skills, scenario's, role-plays
- Discussion of barriers

**Pair exercise:**

**Share a time when you were a bystander and didn't intervene or when you needed help and other bystanders did not intervene**

**Apply stages and reasons to your scenario**

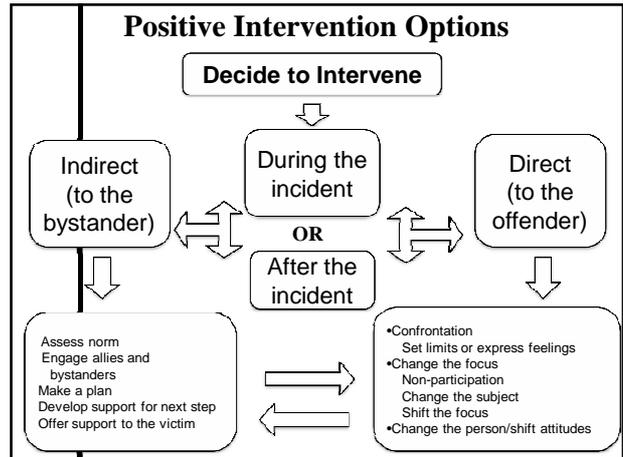
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**Sharing of scenario's  
and insights**



**Participants suggest  
scenario's to use for  
illustration**

**Alan role-plays in front of  
group**

**Intervention Options**

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*Goal: To have more options for responding and feel better about your response*

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**Shifting the Focus  
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- Non-participation
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## Changing the Person ("Shifting Attitudes")

- Is non-confrontational
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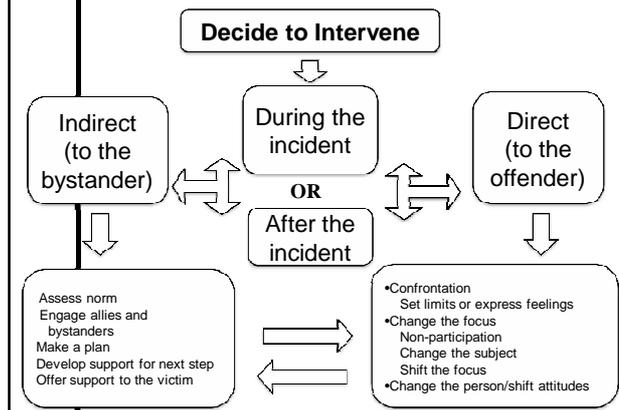
(www.ncbi.org)

## Practice role-plays in groups of three

## Intervention Challenges and Successes

- What worked?
- What was difficult?
- What were the challenges or barriers?
- What did you learn?
- What would increase your comfort level in intervening?

## Positive Intervention Options



## Discussion and Wrap-up

## Citation Information

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## Promoting Active Bystander Intervention to Foster Health and Social Justice on Campus: Theory, Research and Skills

Social Norms and Active Bystander Intervention Case Studies

Alan Berkowitz

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium  
August 15-16, 2013  
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**Pair exercise:**  
**How might I apply what I learned yesterday on my campus?**

## Case Studies

**Ohio University: Small Group Norms and BI Sexual Assault Prevention Workshop for Men**

**Florida State: BI Social Norms Media Campaign**

**University of Central Missouri Small Group SN-BI workshop for Greeks**

**University of California at San Diego BIT – “Every BIT Counts”**

## A Model Rape Prevention Program for Men

- Developed by Alan Berkowitz
- Tested by Christine Gidycz of Ohio University in a CDC funded study
- Incorporates definition of consent, normative feedback (about men in the workshop and men on campus), and practice in bystander intervention strategies (responding to scenarios)
- Offered in parallel with a women's program
- Workshop recipients were men and women in residence halls with matched control groups

## Findings for Men at Four Month Follow-up

- Perceived that their peers would be more likely to intervene (including sexually aggressive men)
- Perceived less reinforcement from peers for sexually aggressive behavior (among sexually aggressive men)
- Associated less with sexually aggressive peers
- Less likely to engage in sexually aggressive behavior (1.5% experimental versus 6.7% control)
- Reduced victimization among women (7-month)
- But assaults rebounded at 7-month follow-up

Preventing Sexual Aggression Among College Men: An Evaluation of a Social Norms and Bystander Intervention Program\*  
Violence Against Women, 17(6): 720-42

## Implications and Recommendations

- Potential promising approach, however cannot be sure of the mechanisms that led to change
- Greater participation rates within residence halls, intensive facilitator training and mentoring, and pairing with a parallel women's program may have also led to positive outcomes
- Attitude change not required for behavior or culture change
- The intervention could be strengthened by:
  - Intensifying the bystander intervention component
  - Teaching peer mentors to model and reinforce healthy norms and bystander intervention
  - Reinforce positive norms through media campaigns and other channels
  - Parallel, reinforcing interventions before and after the workshop

### Programmatic Components FSU Sexual Violence Prevention Project

- > Campus-Wide Social Norms Marketing (SNM) Campaign
  - Correct Student Misperceptions of Attitudes and Behaviors That Influence Sexual Violence
- > Peer-Facilitated "Men's/Women's Workshop"
  - Trained Peer-Educators to Facilitate 90-Minute Workshops
  - Targeted to 'All Male' or 'All Female' Groups on Campus (Predominately Within the Greek Community)
- > Campus Based Community Action Team (CAT)
  - Component of Healthy Campus 2020 Committee Chaired by FSU Vice President for Student Affairs
  - 10-Member Sexual Health/Sexual Violence Prevention Sub-Committee

### FSU Sexual Violence Prevention Survey (Actual and Perceived Norms)

- sexual activity
- attitudes on consent, rape myths & bystander intervention
- actual behavior for bystander intervention, consent, disapproval of sexist remarks

*On-line survey administered to 3,000 male undergraduates*

### Social Norms Marketing Campaign Themes

- Bystander theme: **"Most FSU men would intervene to prevent sexual harassment or sexual assault"**
- Rape myth-not blaming victims theme: **"Most FSU men agree that blaming sexual assault victims is wrong"**
- Sexually active theme: **"Most FSU men are not as sexually active as you might think"**

CARING & RESPONSIBLE EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

97% of FSU men surveyed would advise someone who intervened to prevent sexual assault.

FSUmeasureup.com

en measure UP

UNCONQUERED

THE MEASURE OF A MAN

HOW DO FSU MEN MEASURE UP? 99% of you agree that if a close friend were in an abusive relationship or being sexually assaulted, they would want someone to help or intervene on their behalf. Measuring up is about making the right choice.

FSUmeasureup.com

9 OUT OF 10 FSU MEN would do something to help IF THEY SAW A WOMAN BEING MISTREATED

FSUmeasureup.com

FSU is proudly supported by funding from the Rape Prevention/Recovery Fund provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the Texas Department of Health (TDH). The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC, or CDC.



### Media Campaign Outcomes

- Misperceptions corrected in all four campaign theme areas
- Increase from 85% to 90% in men who say they get consent before sex
- Increase from 62% to 71% who stop “first time date says no”
- Small increase (from 88% to 91%) of men who would intervene if they saw emotional abuse
- Better outcomes for workshop (from 77% to 85% for BI)

### Comments

- Small group workshops may have greater impact but reach less individuals
- Less success with bystander intervention theme
- Potentially synergistic effect of small group workshops and media campaign not evaluated

### University of Central Missouri EPIC Program “Encouraging Positive Interventions in Chapters”

- Collect actual and perceived norms in Greek chapters for alcohol-related bystander scenario's
- Share results of data with chapters in tailored workshops
- Social norms media campaign
- Active BI Video contest

### Program Overview

- 90 minutes
- Shared social norms data and taught theory
- Taught bystander intervention theory and skills
- Used clickers to teach, check understanding and reflect
- Practiced skills with role plays and scenario worksheets

### How much does the following bother you? (fraternity)

Noticing an intoxicated chapter member harassing or bothering someone

	Perception	Reality
Not at all	7.7%	11.5%
Somewhat	50.0%	11.5%
Very much	38.5%	73.1%

## A Typical Thursday Night (sorority example)

- ❖ 70% of members *think* their chapter members typically drink **more than 3 drinks** on a Thursday.
- ❖ In *reality* 76% of members actually drink **3 or less**.
  - ❖ 26% drink 1-3 drinks
  - ❖ 50% drink 0 drinks

**Did You Know?**

85% of UCM Greek students think it's unacceptable to miss class due to alcohol.

Data collected from Fall 2009 UCM survey.

The statistics in this ad were developed under a grant from the Office of Student Health. However, these statistics do not necessarily represent the policy of the University of Central Missouri. We do not assume any liability for the Federal Government. For more information contact the UCM Office of Student Health at (660) 43-4204.

**UCM GREEK MEN**

**LEADING THE WAY TO AN EPIC FUTURE.**

91% of UCM fraternity men think it's acceptable to stop a brother from drinking more if he has had too much.

95% of UCM fraternity men think it's unacceptable for a brother to miss chapter commitments due to alcohol use.

91% of UCM fraternity men think it's unacceptable for a brother to miss class due to alcohol use.

Department of Student Health Services, University of Central Missouri, 1110 University of Education, Warrensburg, Missouri 64588. DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AND YOU SHOULD NOT ASSUME ENDORSEMENT BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE HEALTH OFFICE AT 660-43-4204.

## Intervening Data

Comfort level- Cutting off a chapter member  
Scale 1-5, 1 = Not at all, 5 = Very

Scale	2009 (%)	2010 (%)
1 & 2	13.8	8.2
3	18.4	18
4 & 5	67.7	73.2

## UCSD "Every Little BIT Counts"

- Comprehensive social norms and BI survey and focus groups to identify BI barriers
- BIT training model – skill based non-confrontational
- Dissemination throughout student affairs
- Collaboration with campus partners
- Creation of "bystander intervention group"

**UCSD BIT Model**  
Bystander Intervention Techniques

**The 4 A's**

- ↑ ACKNOWLEDGE
- ↑ ASSESS
- ↑ ACT
- ↑ AFFIRM

saic.ucsd.edu

**UCSD BIT Model**  
Bystander Intervention Techniques

**ACT**

- I** Interrupt
- D** Distract
- E** Engage peers
- A** Authorities
- S** Safety

saic.ucsd.edu



**Special thanks to:**

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& Ashley Guyer (CMU)

Chris Gidycz (Ohio University) &  
Lindsay Orchowski (Brown University)

Nancy Wahlig (UCSD)



**Comments?**

**Questions?**



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**Next Steps**

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**Next Steps**

- What?
- How?
- Who?
- Who are my potential partners?
  - How to get campus buy-in
  - How to address challenges?



**Writing exercise:**  
**What can I imagine implementing on my campus?**  
**What are the barriers?**



**Meet in Small Groups**

Meet with others from your campus to share your ideas

Report back to larger group



**Wrap Up**  
**Final Comments and Questions**



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