

The Three Ds Model of Sexual Harassment Intervention

Distract

Creating a distraction to interrupt the situation can be a lower risk, non-confrontational way to support the person who is, or might be, being harassed.

You can try distracting the person who is being sexually aggressive, or you can distract the potential victim. Either way, your goal is to stop a situation from worsening. You could insert yourself into the conversation, for example: 'Hey aren't you John's friend?' or 'Where do I get the bus to...?'. This might give you time to check with the potential victim and ask if there's a problem, or just give them an opportunity to leave.

Delegate

There are times when, because of the safety risk, or the availability of people who are in a better position than you to do something, it's better to ask others to intervene. For example, in a bar or nightclub you could ask a staff member to check on someone you feel is vulnerable.

Sometimes when you don't know the victim and the abuser, friends of the people involved might be in a better position to do something. You could say to them, 'I'm concerned about that person. Would you be able to check in on the situation?'

Important: Phone the Gardaí if you witness a situation you feel is dangerous.

Direct

Sometimes you might need to make a direct approach to the potential victim or the potential abuser.

It might be enough to use body language to show your disapproval and concern about what is going on. You could do this by watching and making it clear that you're keeping an eye on the situation.

If you have to say or do something it should never be violent, as you'd be putting yourself and the potential victim in danger.

You can ask the person you're concerned about if they're ok, and you can offer to call them a taxi or find a safe way home. You can tell the potential abuser that you are concerned about the potential victim, or that you're uncomfortable leaving them alone in that situation.

Important: Never put yourself in danger if you think there is a risk of violence. Seek the help of a trustworthy adult.

Source: This content is adapted from <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ea0f39-how-to-help-and-become-an-ally/>