

# Bystander Intervention

*How to step in if you witness harassment*

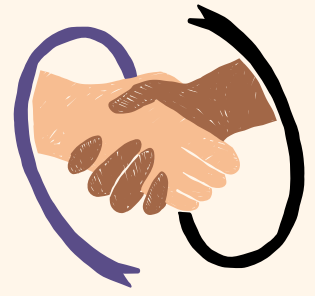


 **STEP IN  
NOT ASIDE**



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
**HARROW**

**Harassment can happen  
anywhere and to anyone**  
- on the street, at work, in school,  
on public transport, or online.



### What is harassment?

It's unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel unsafe, uncomfortable, intimidated, or distressed.



**Harassment comes in many forms:**

**Verbal** – comments, insults, threats, or unwanted sexual remarks

**Non-verbal** – staring, gestures, following someone, blocking their way

**Physical** – unwanted touching or invading personal space

**Online** – abusive messages, comments, or sharing images without consent

Harassment can be a one-off incident or repeated behaviour.

Harassment may happen based on a person's gender, race, religion, disability, sexuality, age, or other characteristics.

If someone feels harassed, their feelings matter - it is not “just banter” if it causes harm.

### What is bystander intervention?

It means recognising harmful behaviour and taking safe, appropriate action to support someone who may be at risk.

You do not have to confront an abuser or put yourself in danger. Small actions can make a big difference.



Scan here for the  
LBH Violence  
Against Women  
& Girls support  
directory



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# How can I intervene?

## The 5 D's

Many people want to help when they see something wrong, but don't always know how to do so safely.



**ALWAYS call  
999 in an  
emergency**

The 5 Ds help you safely support someone experiencing harassment. These methods make clear that harassment is never acceptable and empowers you to make our community feel safer.

**Everyone can use the 5Ds! They're designed to keep situations from escalating, and four of them are indirect approaches, so you can intervene without confrontation.**

**Distract** – Interrupt the situation (e.g. ask the victim a question - 'what's the time?'). **Do not engage with perpetrator.**

**Delegate** – Get help from a person of authority, such as security / a bus driver, if you don't feel safe stepping in.

**Delay** – Check in afterwards and offer support if intervening in the moment feels unsafe.

**Direct (only if safe)** – Calmly ask the harasser to stop, if you're confident it won't escalate.

**Document** – If it's safe to so, record what's happening and offer it to the person affected. Delete any video immediately if asked and do not post online.



**Choosing not to act in the moment is okay. Support can come later.**



For further advice and support, visit:

[righttobe.org/guides/bystander-intervention-training/](https://righttobe.org/guides/bystander-intervention-training/)



# What else do I need to know?



## How do I keep myself safe while intervening?

**Your safety comes first. You should never put yourself at risk to help someone.**

- Trust your instincts and assess the situation
- Keep a safe distance and stay aware of your surroundings
- Avoid physical intervention or confrontation
- Use safer options like Distract, Delegate, or Delay if needed
- Get help from others or seek support from staff or authorities
- Leave the situation if it feels unsafe and call 999 in an emergency

Even small, safe actions can make a difference.



## How can I get more training?

**Suzy Lamplugh Trust** offers free 30-minute anti-harassment training to help build confidence and practical bystander intervention skills.

**#StepInNotAside** e-learning will soon be available to Harrow residents, providing flexible online training on how to recognise harassment and intervene safely.

Visit [www.harrow.gov.uk/VAWG](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/VAWG) to access training, resources, and local support services.



If you ever feel unsafe, visit one of Harrow's Safe Havens - local places where trained staff can offer support and help you stay safe.  
[www.harrow.gov.uk/safehavens](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/safehavens)

