

Bystander Intervention

Members' observation of a high-risk situation (i.e., a situation that may precede a negative experience), and how they would intervene to diffuse or stop the behavior or remove a potential victim from the event.



Bystander Interventions aim to reduce violence by encouraging individuals to intervene in a safe and effective manner when they hear or see circumstances that could lead to violence.

The Department of Defense strives to develop individuals to safely intervene to diffuse or stop inappropriate behaviors or remove a potential victim from a potential event. Below are favorable and unfavorable indicators and outcomes that may be present within an organization. Leaders should focus on promoting those favorable behaviors that will foster a positive organizational culture.

	Favorable	Unfavorable
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members safely take action and help someone who may be a target of a sexual assault Strong group norms and a sense of belonging encouraging young members to speak up about violence and sexist language Leaders attending and supporting training events Sexist behaviors (e.g. comments, jokes) are addressed promptly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resistance or fear to address rude, inconsiderate offensive humor or unprofessional behaviors (e.g., comments and jokes) Increase in peer's alcohol consumption and risky behaviors Reports of unwanted sexual behaviors (e.g., intentional touching, exposure to sexual situations)
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in violence and inappropriate behaviors Increase in recognizing abusive behaviors towards men, women, and children prior to an incident Decreased alcohol/drug related incidents that might have resulted in a sexual assault Members discuss issues and model positive behaviors by military leaders Stronger sense of teamwork, camaraderie and community involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats of violence (e.g., sexual assault, hazing rituals, bullying, or suicide) Low retention rate, fewer new employee hires due to work environment; increase in requests for reassignments Serious short and long-term health consequences including physical injury, poor mental health and chronic physical health problems

Bystander Intervention Strategies

These below strategies can help to address negative behaviors.

Develop programs to prevent incidents with a focus on bystander intervention.

- Include all members in sexual assault and other prevention initiatives and training.
- Provide time lines and measures of success for programs to determine their effectiveness.
- Educate members on techniques as to how and when to intervene (before, during, or after a negative incident).
- Provide members an opportunity to express concerns for their physical safety and potential social stigmas surrounding bystander intervention, then discuss how to overcome these hurdles.
- Display posters, videos, and other forms of media to influence attitudes and beliefs about bystander intervention.

Ensure effective strategies are used to educate and influence Service Members knowledge and attitudes.

- Train members to identify high risk situations to recognize when a sexual assault is likely to occur.
- Discuss the pros and cons of intervention in different scenarios.
- Provide training techniques on how and when to intervene (before, during, or after a sexual assault).
- Provide realistic scenarios; have members determine a plan of action and discuss options.
- Create a commitment agreement for members to read and sign as part of their allegiance.
- Dispel sexual assault myths and stereotyping by educating service members on the facts.
- Hold multi-session programs to improve bystander attitudes and increase helping behaviors.
- Provide time lines and measures of success for programs to determine their effectiveness.
- Create realistic training scenarios members find relatable and may encounter.

Resources

- Burn, S. M. (2009). A situational model of sexual assault prevention through bystander intervention. *Sex Roles*, 60(11-12), 779-792.
- Banyard, V. L., Plante, E. G., & Moynihan, M. M. (2004). Bystander education: Bringing a broader community perspective to sexual violence prevention. *Journal of community psychology*, 32(1), 61-79.
- Banyard, V. L., Moynihan, M. M., & Plante, E. G. (2007). Sexual violence prevention through bystander education: An experimental evaluation. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35(4), 463-481.
- McMahon, S., & Banyard, V. L. (2012). When can I help? A conceptual framework for the prevention of sexual violence through bystander intervention. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 13(1), 3-14.
- Potter, S. J., & Stapleton, J. G. (2012). Translating sexual assault prevention from a college campus to a United States military installation: Piloting the know-your-power bystander social marketing campaign. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 27(8), 1593-1621.

Additional Resources

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program
Department of Defense DIRECTIVE NUMBER 6495.01 January 23, 2012
Incorporating Change 3, Effective April 11, 2017

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program Procedures
Department of Defense DIRECTIVE NUMBER 6495.02 March 28, 2013
Incorporating Change 3, Effective May 24, 2017

Military OneSource <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>
<http://www.sapr.mil/>
<https://www.safehelpline.org/>
www.defenseculture.mil
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/index.html>

USCG

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program COMDTINST M1754.10E

USMC

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program MARINE CORPS ORDER 1752-5B

USN

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program OPNAVINST 1752.1C

USAF

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program *AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 90-6001 Incorporating Change 1,*

USA

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program Army Regulation 600-20, July 24, 2020

Additional Reading

- Army SHARP Guidebook: <http://www.preventsexualassault.army.mil/>
- USN/USMC Commander's Quick Reference Legal Handbook Jan 2015: <http://www.hqmc.marines.mil/>
- The Airmen Handbook 1 October 2015: http://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a1/publication/afhandbook1/afhandbook1.pdf
- USCG Command Toolkit: <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Human-Resources-CG-1/Health-Safety-and-Work-Life-CG-11/Office-of-Work-Life-CG-111/Sexual-Assault-Prevention-and-Response-Program/>

