

A large graphic with the words 'SHOW UP' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters against a dark purple background. A thick, curved rainbow arches behind the text. Stylized human figures in various colors (purple, orange, teal, pink) are interacting with the letters: one figure sits on the top of the 'W', another sits inside the 'U', a third pushes a shopping cart in front of the 'S', and others stand or sit near the 'O' and 'P'.

# SHOW UP

**YOUR GUIDE TO BYSTANDER INTERVENTION**

An illustration of a public space at night. In the foreground, a person in a red outfit walks past a bench. To the left, a person in a purple outfit stands near a food cart. In the background, there are trees, a building, and a street lamp. A signpost with a white sign is visible on the right.

**PUBLIC  
ACCESS  
DESIGN**

# WE ALL PLAY A ROLE

in creating safe public space by supporting each other when we're harassed. That's what bystander intervention is all about.

## A LOT OF DIFFERENT THINGS COUNT AS HARASSMENT...

- Intimidating looks and staring
- Comments about appearance
- Vulgar gestures, whistling, and making kissing noises
- Following someone
- Racist, xenophobic, homophobic, sexist, and transphobic slurs

**WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE IN PUBLIC SPACE.** But that's not how everyone experiences it.

- Public exposure and masturbation
- Grabbing, touching, and groping
- Defacing public spaces

## HARASSMENT CAN ESCALATE INTO VIOLENCE

## HARASSMENT CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE...

- Near schools, playgrounds, and campuses\*
- On buses, trains, and planes
- In stores and other places of business
- On sidewalks and streets, and in parks

- At sports events, festivals, and concerts
- Online
- Near workplaces\*

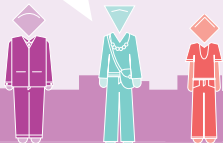
\*Special laws cover harassment at school and work, but they aren't addressed here.



# PEOPLE EXPERIENCE PUBLIC SPACE DIFFERENTLY

**OUR IDENTITIES** — who we are and how others see us—impact our safety in public space and how we experience harassment.

What are your identities?



How do they affect how you move through public space?



Have you experienced harassment before?



Do you identify as female or gender-expansive?



Do you identify as LGBTQ+?

Are you a person of color?



Are you from an immigrant family?



Do you have a visual or hearing impairment? Do you have a disability?



## WHAT IS PRIVILEGE?

Privilege is a set of unearned benefits and power maintained by a group in society. A person can hold privilege in any or all areas of their identity—race and ethnicity, gender identity and expression, class, language, ability, religion, and many others. Your privilege—and your vulnerability—can change depending on the situation you're in. In some spaces, your privilege gives you more power than others. That means you might be able to help in a way others can't.

**But remember: Bystander intervention isn't about being a hero!**

# COMMON REASONS PEOPLE DON'T TAKE ACTION

## **“NOBODY ELSE IS DOING ANYTHING.”**

This kind of thinking is called the “bystander effect” and it allows a whole crowd to wait for someone else to act. It takes courage to be the first to do something.

## **“I’M AFRAID I’LL MAKE THINGS WORSE.”**

You can pick a less direct action, like asking someone else to help.

## **“IT’S HARMLESS, RIGHT?”**

Verbal harassment makes people feel uncomfortable and threatened when it’s directed at them—or even when they witness harassment directed at others. It can also escalate to physical violence.

## **“IT’S A CULTURAL THING.”**

Harassment is a product of racism, sexism, homophobia, and xenophobia—not the product of any one culture or identity.

## **“I CAN’T MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”**

Your actions can discourage the person who is harassing, support the person who is being harassed, and help prevent future harassment.

## **“IT’S NOT MY PROBLEM.”**

Even if you’ve never experienced harassment, a friend or loved one probably has. Harassment hurts everyone.

## **TIPS FOR MOVING TO ACTION**

The first step to being helpful is paying attention to what’s going on around you. If it’s hard to tell what’s happening, focus on the person who is being harassed. Do they look uncomfortable? Are they trying to move away? Look up from your phone and take out your earbuds to be a good observer.

Turn the page for tips on becoming an active bystander.



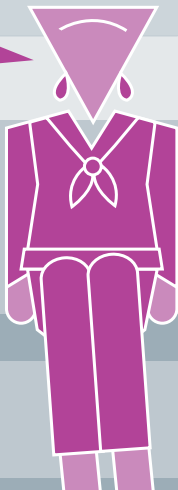
## THE 5Ds OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

# DISTRACT

Take an indirect approach to de-escalate the situation.

### SAY:

Excuse me, do you know what the next stop is?



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Start a conversation with the person being harassed or find another way to draw attention away from them. Ask them for directions or the time, or drop something.

## THE 5D<sub>s</sub> OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

# DELEGATE

Get help from someone else.

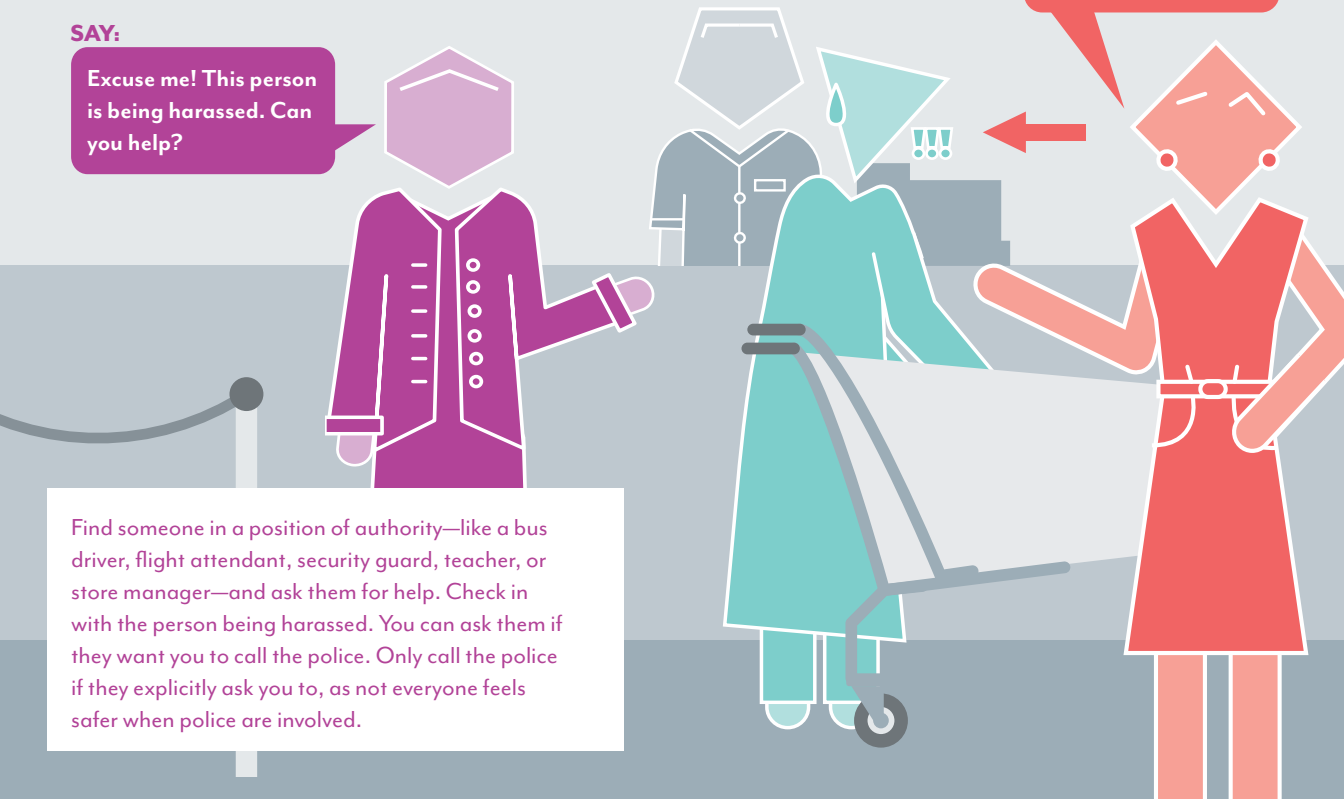
### SAY:

Excuse me! This person is being harassed. Can you help?

Find someone in a position of authority—like a bus driver, flight attendant, security guard, teacher, or store manager—and ask them for help. Check in with the person being harassed. You can ask them if they want you to call the police. Only call the police if they explicitly ask you to, as not everyone feels safer when police are involved.

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## THE 5Ds OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

# DOCUMENT

It can be helpful for the the person being harassed to have a video or other evidence of the incident. Laws about recording in public vary, so check local laws first.

*Is anyone helping the person being harassed?  
If no, use one of the other 4Ds to help them.*

### TIPS FOR DOCUMENTING PUBLIC HARASSMENT

- Keep a safe distance.
- Film street signs or other landmarks that help identify the location.
- Say the day and time.

*Only document the situation if it's safe.*

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**ALWAYS** ask the person who was harassed what they want to do with the footage. **NEVER** post it online or use it without their permission.

Keep your attention on the person being harassed—**make sure anything you do is focused on supporting them.**

## THE 5Ds OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

# DELAY

After the incident is over, check in with the person who was harassed.

SAY:

Are you okay?

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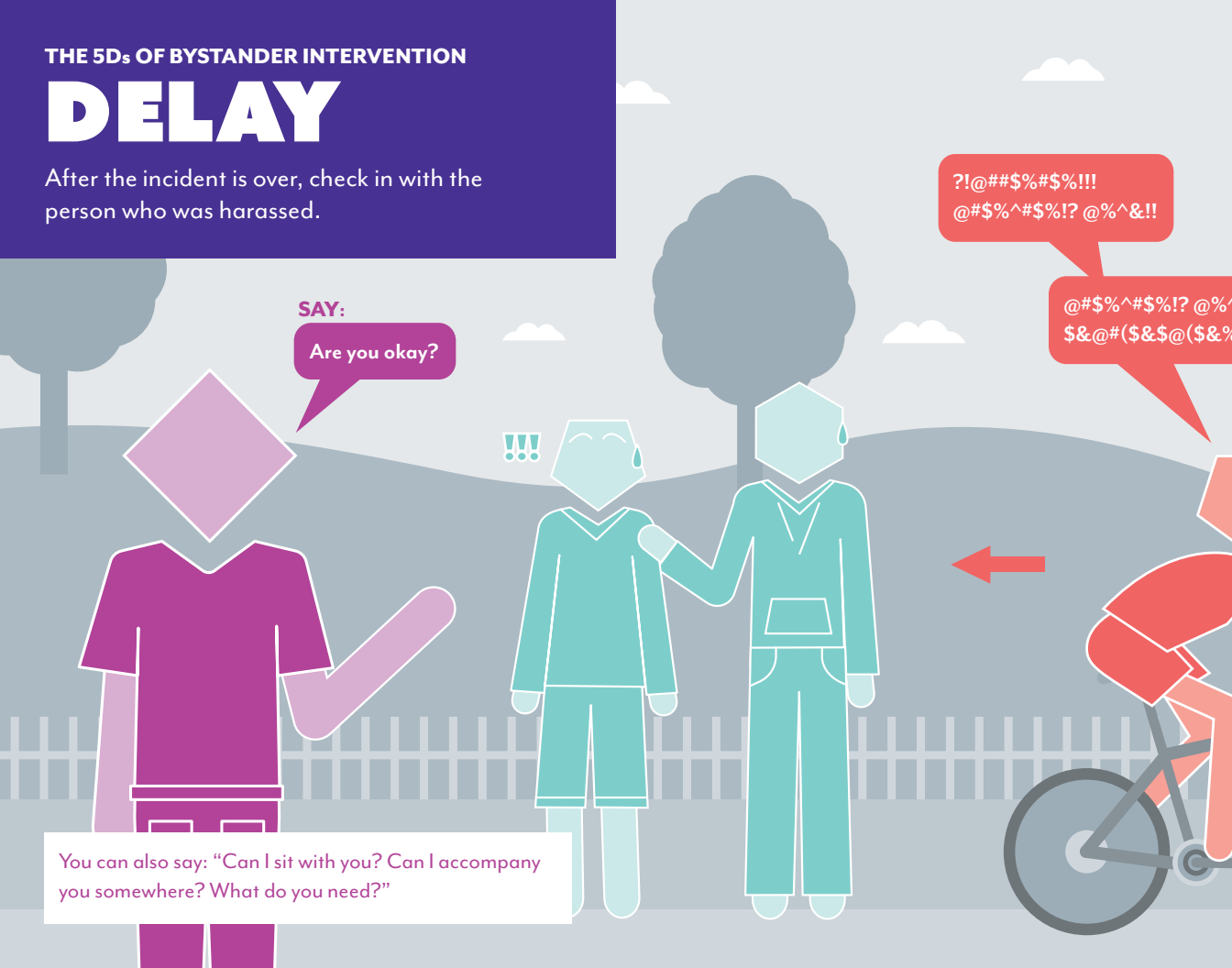
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You can also say: "Can I sit with you? Can I accompany you somewhere? What do you need?"





## THE 5Ds OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

# DIRECT

Assess your safety first. Speak up about the harassment. Be firm and clear.

**SAY:**

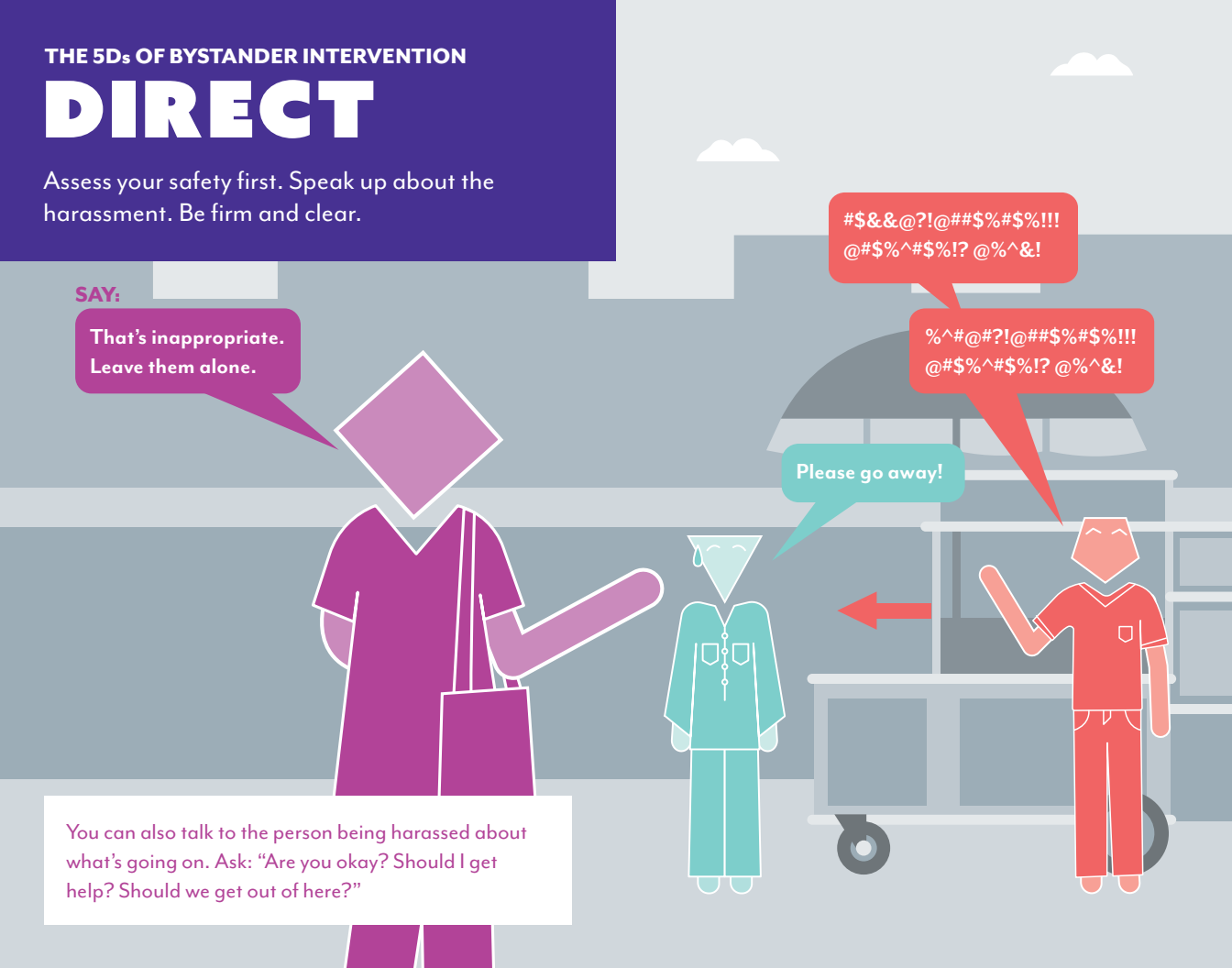
That's inappropriate.  
Leave them alone.

You can also talk to the person being harassed about what's going on. Ask: "Are you okay? Should I get help? Should we get out of here?"

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Please go away!



# SHARING YOUR STORY AS A BYSTANDER...



Helps build a network of support by reminding others they're not alone

Gives other people and organizations important info on where and how harassment is happening



Amplifies the stories of people who've experienced harassment and bystanders

Helps make harassment visible



**Share your story and read other people's stories** at [RightToBe.org](https://RightToBe.org). You'll also find more resources there, including info on what you can do if you're harassed.

This project was produced through **Public Access Design**, a program of the **Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)**. Public Access Design projects use design to make complex urban issues accessible to the people most affected by them. [publicaccessdesign.org](https://publicaccessdesign.org)

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## The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)

is a nonprofit that uses the power of design and art to increase meaningful civic engagement. [welcometoCUP.org](https://welcometoCUP.org)

**Right To Be** is a global, people-powered movement to end harassment. Our mission is to end harassment in all its forms by building the power of everyday people to create safe and welcoming environments for all. [RightToBe.org](https://RightToBe.org)

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RIGHT  
TO  
BE

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# WE ALL PLAY A ROLE IN MAKING PUBLIC SPACE SAFE.

Together, we can end hate and harassment!

