

How to be a Supportive Seminole: What Can You Do?

Be a supportive bystander if you witness dating or sexual violence. What a bystander does (or doesn't do) to intervene can make a huge difference. Bystanders are important in helping to prevent dating and sexual violence.



How You Can Be a Supportive Bystander:

Ask a friend or acquaintance if he/she is okay.

If you notice a bruise, broken bone, or overhearing a loud argument, show concern that you believe his/her abuser may have caused the injury or been abusive during an argument. Be sure your friend knows about campus and community resources.

Support a friend who is concerned about his/her relationship.

Many people will try not to give relationship advice or tell someone that they are concerned for him/her. Dating violence and sexual violence are important issues, and it is important to reinforce a victim's concerns and feelings about abuse.

Provide resources to someone you think may be experiencing abuse.

Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger. Refer a friend in need to the FSU Police Department, Counseling Center, or Victim Advocate Program (click here for resource guide).

Stop abuse from happening.

If you are in a bar or a club and see someone attempting to drug a drink, violently grab someone, or anything else that looks suspicious, say something. Let a bartender, bouncer/security guard, police officer, or the abuser know that you saw what happened and it is not okay.

How to be a Supportive Seminole: Support Victims of Violence



Don't blame the victim. Victim blaming is when people, groups, or society as a whole react to violence in a way that places the blame on the victim, not the perpetrator.

Remember: When abuse occurs, the person who is responsible for the abuse is the abuser. An abuser chooses to use violence in order to control and overpower a victim. No one is ever “asking for it” and no one deserves to be abused .

Avoid insensitive statements that place the blame on the victim, such as:

“She shouldn't have been wearing that skirt.”

“If she was actually abusive, he would have left.”

“Why did they drink so much?”

“She just regrets having sex and is making excuses!”

“They are married, so it doesn't matter.”

These statements imply that the victim is at fault for the abuse they experienced.

Combat victim blaming by:

- Discussing victim blaming statements if you hear them. Let your friends and classmates know that these statements are harmful.
- Letting abusers know that violence is not okay.
- Letting victims know that they are not at fault.
- Supporting friends, classmates, teammates, and fraternity/sorority members who have been abused.
- Speaking up against dating violence and sexual violence.