

ACTIVE BYSTANDER STRATEGIES

STRATEGY #1: NAME OR ACKNOWLEDGE AN OFFENSE

- **Example:** "I don't feel comfortable with that kind of humor in this setting—I think someone here might have felt offended."
- **Example:** "I'm sure you didn't mean it, but that could be hurtful."
- **Purpose/goal:** Name or identify inappropriate behavior so it isn't just glossed over or ignored. Create an opening for discussion.
- **Tips:** Direct feedback in the moment may be perceived as disruptive or inappropriate, depending on the forum. Waiting may be more effective in some cases. Highlight the damaging effect of the offense, while avoiding inflammatory language or judgments.

STRATEGY #2: USE BODY LANGUAGE TO SHOW DISAPPROVAL

- **Example:** Frown, clear your throat, wide-eyed surprised look.
- **Example:** (*more extreme case*) Get up and walk out (or log out)
- **Purpose/goal:** Communicate that the behavior is unacceptable without embarrassing the offending person, so that they can save face.
- **Tips:** Minimize the risk to yourself, by keeping your reaction as non-threatening as possible.

STRATEGY #3: TALK PRIVATELY WITH THE INAPPROPRIATE ACTOR

- **Example response:** (*Privately, after meeting*): "Look, I know you well enough to know that you probably didn't intend any offense with your joke. But just the same I don't feel comfortable with that kind of humor in this setting—I think someone may have been offended."
- **Purpose/goal:** Give clear feedback and express your opinion in a way that allows the inappropriate actor to save face.

STRATEGY #4: INTERRUPT THE BEHAVIOR

- **Example:** "I am not okay with these kinds of comments."
- **Example response:** (*If people are arguing or emotion is running high*): Interrupt and say, "I'm sorry to interrupt, but I want to stop you before you say something you will regret."
- **Purpose/goal:** Protect someone from being hurt or offended and someone else from giving offense or harm. Make it clear that such behavior is not acceptable in this community.

STRATEGY #5: PUBLICLY SUPPORT AN AGGRIEVED PERSON

- **Example:** "I disagree with what was said. You don't deserve that."
- **Purpose/goal:** Help someone who has been hurt or offended, and/or prevent further injury or offense. Uphold a community norm or value, making it clear to all that others in the community do not condone such behavior.
- **Tips:** Consider the risks of taking sides. Sometimes the need to prevent further harm immediately outweighs the potential for retaliation against either you or the aggrieved person by the offending person, but sometimes it does not, making a private word with the aggrieved person and/or the offending person later a preferable course of action.