



A black and white photograph of a football stadium. The stands are filled with spectators, though they appear as blurred shapes due to the shallow depth of field. The field and goal posts are visible in the background.

BE MORE THAN A
BYSTANDER
SASKATCHEWAN



HISTORY

The Be More Than a Bystander program is aimed at educating youth to speak up about violence and abuse against women. The concept of engaging athletes in this initiative began in British Columbia in 2011, when the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) partnered with the BC Lions Football Club. Since then, BC Lions spokesmen have been using their platform to speak up about gender based violence, and are showing other men and young men how important it is for them to do the same.

The BC Lions/EVA BC partnership was the first large-scale, sustained Canadian effort to use this approach towards ending violence against women and girls. The Winnipeg Blue Bombers have now replicated the Bystander program in partnership with Manitoba Status of Women. Other teams have followed by creating their own take on a gender violence prevention message, such as the Toronto Argonauts working with the White Ribbon campaign.

This latest partnership between Football Saskatchewan and Sexual Assault Services Saskatchewan marks another important and substantial effort where Canadian athletes are speaking up to break the silence on violence against women.

The scenarios in the Options Booklet focus on young men in particular, as bystanders to sexist and abusive behavior, not as perpetrators or potential perpetrators. The goal is to suggest ways that friends, classmates, teammates, and others who are not abusive can interrupt or confront those who are.

If a critical mass of young men from all cultural backgrounds speak up, you will help to create a new climate in your school and community and begin to show other males that disrespectful and abusive treatment of girls and women is not cool, is not “manly”, and is completely socially unacceptable.

The Be More Than A Bystander program is based on a program in the United States called the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) which was first developed by Dr Jackson Katz in 1993 at Northeastern University's Centre for the Study of Sport in Society.

The MVP model focuses on men, not as perpetrators or potential perpetrators, but as empowered bystanders who can confront abuse taking place around them. In this model, everyone is a potential bystander – including friends, family members, teammates, classmates, colleagues and co-workers.

The heart of the MVP model is dialogue, using real life scenarios that speak to the experiences of young men and women in high schools and universities. The intent of this interactive dialogue is to help create a peer culture where the abuse of girls and women by some boys and men, and the bullying of both girls and boys, is not acceptable.

This [Options For Intervening Booklet](#) highlights the role that non-abusive youth can play in preventing or interrupting sexist or abusive behavior by your peers. Its purpose is to facilitate discussion about common situations related to abuse and violence, where young men and women have not had the chance to openly explore what they could do to interrupt such abuse or violence.

In this new climate, rates of sexual harassment, sexual assault, teen relationship abuse, bullying, and all forms of school violence will decline dramatically, as will the amount of unnecessary pain and suffering they cause.



WORKING DEFINITIONS

ASSAULT

In the Canadian Criminal Code, 'assault' refers to physical violence or attempts or threats of violence against a person. It includes any unwanted physical contact, especially if it is intended to hurt or intimidate the victim. Physical assault can take the form of hitting, shoving, slapping, beating with fists, or choking. It also includes striking with weapons, such as guns, knives, and axes.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is when somebody touches another person sexually, on purpose, directly or indirectly, without that person's consent. Sexual assault is not limited to vaginal intercourse: it includes any form of sexual activity done without consent (including kissing, touching, oral sex, and vaginal or anal penetration).

In a situation that involves adults, the major factor in determining whether a sexual assault has occurred is the lack of consent, not the type of sexual activity. This offence becomes more severe if carried out with threats or a weapon, or if it causes serious bodily injuries to the victim – this is called "aggravated sexual assault." Sexual assault is a crime of power, where the perpetrator is exercising power over the victim. The majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by men against women.

The age of consent, also known as the "age of protection", for sexual activity is 16 years.

However, the age of consent is 18 years where the sexual activity "exploits" the young person, such as when it involves prostitution, pornography or occurs in a relationship of authority, trust or dependency (e.g., with a teacher, coach or babysitter).

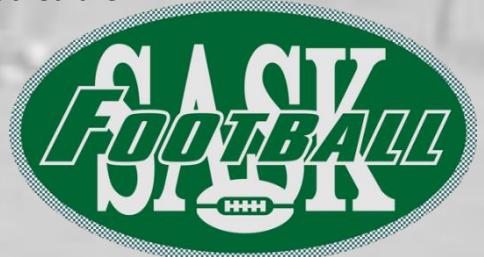
CONSENT

In the case of sexual assaults, the Criminal Code states that for consent to be valid, there must be "voluntary agreement " to engage in the sexual activity in question. Consent is when an individual has affirmatively communicated – in both actions and words – her agreement to engage in a sexual activity. Consent must be continuous, and it can be withdrawn at any time. If the argument is that you believe she consented, there must be evidence that you took reasonable steps to determine this. Consent cannot be used as a defense for any assault if the victim submits or does not resist:

- because of physical force or threats made against her or someone else;
- because of the fear that force will be used;
- because of fraud; or
- because of the exercise of authority.

When it comes to sexual assault, the Criminal Code provides some additional situations in which consent is considered to be invalid. Consent will not be a defense where:

- someone else agrees on the behalf of the victim;
- the victim shows lack of agreement either by her words or conduct;
- the victim consents but then shows lack of agreement to continue;
- the victim is mentally incapable of consenting (e.g., she was drugged, unconscious, drunk, stoned, sleeping or otherwise lacked the mental capacity to consent);
- the victim's agreement is the result of an abuse of a position of trust, power, or authority.



CONSENT WHERE DRUGS or ALCOHOL ARE INVOLVED

It is unlikely that someone under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be found capable of giving valid consent. That means that, legally speaking, any sexual activity with somebody under the influence of drugs or alcohol could be considered sexual assault. If the other person is drunk or high, think twice, even if you believe they are consenting.

The fact that you were too intoxicated to determine whether your partner consented is not a legal defense.

CONSENT WHERE THERE IS A SEXUAL ASSAULT CAUSING BODILY HARM

The fact that a person consented is not a valid defense in cases where the sexual assault caused bodily harm.

SELF DEFENSE

In the Criminal Code of Canada, self-defense is the use of reasonable force to defend oneself against unprovoked assault or to prevent an assault or its repetition, with the intent of stopping the assault. Women who use self-defense against sexual assault and/or relationship violence often employ both physical and verbal tactics. However, a woman does not have to “fight back” or “resist” to show her lack of consent. If she has not voluntarily given consent, she has still been physically or sexually assaulted.

CRIMINAL HARASSMENT or STALKING

It is a criminal offence to repeatedly follow or communicate with someone, or monitor her actions over a period of time, with the result that she reasonably fears for her safety. (This is not the same as sexual harassment.)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is often confused with sexual assault; while they are related, they are different. Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual communication or attention that is offensive, intimidating or humiliating, whether in verbal, written or visual form. Sexual harassment includes unwanted attention, demands, or a pattern of jokes or insults that affect your job, work, school environment or your chances to obtain a service. Sexual harassment falls under Human Rights Law, which is civil legislation, not the Criminal Code of Canada.

VIOLENCE IN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Violence in an intimate relationship (also called “dating violence” or “domestic violence”) is a pattern of abusive behaviours that work to exert power and control over an intimate partner. This violence can take many forms, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial abuse, spiritual abuse, and digital abuse (abuse via technology). Intimate relationship violence is not limited to a particular type of relationship; it can take place in marriages, in common-law couples, and between boyfriends and girlfriends.

**THERE IS SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN SASKATCHEWAN SO YOU CAN
HELP STOP ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS
SK.211.CA - CLICK ‘VIOLENCE/ABUSE’**



HOW YOU CAN BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER

Being more than a bystander is about creating a culture in our society that intervenes in abusive attitudes and behaviour directed towards women in its earliest stages - before it has had the chance to escalate along the continuum of violence.

A culture that no longer sits idly by, allowing violence against women through the silence of bystanders, but one where individuals are empowered to actively help prevent violence against women.

Chances are that at some point in your life you have witnessed, heard or seen someone act in a way that was derogatory, degrading, abusive or violent towards women. Be it in the form of a joke, cat call, comment, put down, or physical or sexual assault, this is all violence against women.

In these moments, people often feel that their only choices are to say nothing, look the other way or physically intervene, potentially exposing themselves to violence. The truth is, there are many more choices.

Much like there is a continuum of violence against women, there is also a continuum of intervention. Intervention can take many forms and there is a mode of intervention to fit any and all individuals.

Intervention can be between friends and colleagues or between strangers. It can entail speaking out about an attitude/action or can be accomplished without using words at all.

When breaking the silence, the most important consideration is that of your safety.

If there is immediate danger or you feel that intervening would be unsafe for you, the woman or others involved, it is best to not intervene yourself but to call the police and/or security. When being more than a bystander, know that violence is never a solution and will only aggravate and escalate a situation.

In cases where there is no immediate danger, there are many ways that you can help by being more than a bystander and breaking the silence on violence against women.

24 HOUR WOMEN'S ABUSE SASKATCHEWAN CRISIS LINE

1-888-388-0880



NON-VERBAL WAYS TO BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER (AMONGST FRIENDS)

Refuse to join in when derogatory, degrading, abusive and violent attitudes or behaviors are being displayed.

Register your lack of approval for such attitudes or behaviours by leaving the individual or group perpetrating them. Staying silent while others act and behave inappropriately condones what they are doing; leaving shows that you don't agree with it and are not willing to participate or act as an audience.

Offer your presence. If you see that a woman is being targeted, simply stand near to her so that she and the harasser/abuser know that she is not alone. He may be less likely to continue or escalate the violence knowing that there are witnesses.

Give control to the woman who is the target of the violence by speaking directly to her, ask "Is he bothering you?", or "Are you okay?" and ask "Is there any way I can help?" This takes power away from the perpetrator. If the woman says that she would like your help, do what you can to be of assistance. If she expresses that she is not in need of your help, respect this and move on.

Take action if there is a threat of immediate danger by calling local law enforcement.

VERBAL WAYS TO BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER (IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE PERSON)

Distraction as intervention: If you witness a woman being harassed/abused, ask the perpetrator for the time, or clear your throat while standing near him, this will momentarily break his focus from the target of his harassment.

Vocalize your support as intervention. If a woman alerts you that she has been harassed/abused in a crowd, call out in support "Hey man, leave her alone", "I don't like how you are treating her, stop it".

Refuse to join in and discourage others from participating. Be direct about what you have seen, point out the exact behavior/attitude/words/action, but don't pass judgment on the individual perpetrating it.

Things you could say:

"I don't think that joke is funny", or "that joke makes me uncomfortable".

"Your words/actions are uncalled for, what you're saying/doing is wrong."

"It's wrong to treat women that way. I don't agree with what you're doing/saying."

"What you're doing is harassment, not only is it wrong, it's criminal."

"How would you feel if another man did this to your mother, sister, wife or daughter?"

Rally other bystanders to join you in voicing disapproval. "By being silent, you're saying that this action/behaviour/attitude/word is alright with you. Well it's not okay with me, I don't respect it and I hope you don't either."

If there is immediate danger, call local law enforcement. If you feel it is safe to do so, let it be known to the perpetrator that the police have been called and that they should stop what they are doing because it is illegal.

KIDS' HELP PHONE (24/7):
1-800-668-6868



VERBAL WAYS TO BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER (AMONGST FRIENDS)

Ideally, approach the person when they are alone, calm and you are in a situation where you can speak openly without being interrupted. Let them know that you are coming to speak with them **because you care** about them and are concerned about what is going on.

You can say something to the effect of:

- “Something seems to be going on with you, can we talk?”
- “I care about you and I’m worried about you, can I help?”
- “I couldn’t help but notice your actions/behaviours/attitudes/words the other day. I’m concerned because these actions/behaviours/attitudes/words are unhealthy.”
- “I’m worried about you and her (and your children’s) safety because of your actions/behaviour/attitude/words.”
- “I care about you and was really surprised to see you act/behave/speak in such a violent/unhealthy way towards your partner.”
- “Your actions/behaviours/attitudes/words make me afraid that you may seriously hurt her if you don’t find a way to deal with your problems.”
- “When you act/behave/speak to her like that, do you see the effect your words/actions have on her emotionally/physically? That isn’t acceptable, everyone has the right to emotional and physical safety, it’s criminal to take that away from someone.”
- “Healthy partners don’t act/behave/speak like that towards their partner, at the end of the day it amounts to violence and you need to stop acting/behaving/speaking this way.” Loving your partner should mean protecting her from abuse, not perpetrating it against her.”
- “The way you act/speak/behave makes me worry for the emotional and physical safety of your partner and your children. Children learn what relationships look like from their parents. Is this what you want your children learning is “healthy”?

Directly reference the behaviour that you are concerned about but do not judge them.

Try to avoid validating any excuses or justifications for the abuse. The purpose of your intervention is to help this individual acknowledge that their actions, behaviour, attitude, and/or words are not acceptable and get the help they need to ensure it is not repeated, not to justify the past.

Inform them that actions/behavior/attitude/words constitute violence and that they need to stop.

Provide him with some avenues that may help him curb his abusive behavior.

Remind him that it doesn’t have to be this way, that there is help and that both he and his partner deserve health in their relationship. You may suggest that he see a professional counsellor.

Contact your local community based victim service program to find out what is available in your area for men who use violence.

SASKATCHEWAN SEXUAL
ASSAULT SERVICES

SSASK.CA



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Heather Ryan & David Dube Foundation



RESOURCES



Email: sasas@sasktel.net
Office: 306.757.1941
Cell: 306.526.8776

(South East Saskatchewan) Envision Counselling and Support Centre - Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Line - 24/7 Hours

[1-800-214-7083](tel:1-800-214-7083)

(South Saskatchewan) Moose Jaw Transition House - Domestic Violence Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[306-693-6511](tel:306-693-6511)

(South West Saskatchewan) Southwest Crisis Services - Safe Shelter - 24/7 Hours

[306-778-3692](tel:306-778-3692)

Yorkton Women in Need - Domestic Violence Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[1-888-783-3111](tel:1-888-783-3111)

Battlefords and Area Sexual Assault Centre - Domestic Violence/Abuse Line - 24/7 Hours

[306-445-2742](tel:306-445-2742)

(Central Saskatchewan) West Central Crisis and Family Support Centre - Victim Assistance & Support Team - 24/7 Hours

[306-463-1860](tel:306-463-1860)

(North Saskatchewan) Northeast Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[1-800-611-6349](tel:1-800-611-6349)

(North Saskatchewan) Piwapan Women's Centre - Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[306-425-4090](tel:306-425-4090) or [306-764-1011](tel:306-764-1011)

(Regina) Family Service Regina - Mon - Fri 8:30 am - noon, 1 pm - 4:30 pm

[306-757-6675](tel:306-757-6675)

Regina Transition House - Domestic Violence/Abuse Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[306-569-2292](tel:306-569-2292)

(Saskatchewan) Saskatoon Interval House - Women's Abuse Crisis Line - 24/7 Hours

[1-888-338-0880](tel:1-888-338-0880)

(Saskatoon) Family Service Saskatoon - Mon - Fri 9 am - 5 pm

[306-244-0127](tel:306-244-0127)

