

Non-consensual sex may not be something you worry too much about for yourself, but chances are decent that you've seen someone else in a situation that was sketchy at best. Maybe you know the kind of guy who makes it his mission to get women drunk and alone to take advantage of them. Maybe you've seen a friend falling for easy lines from a manipulative person because she liked him. Maybe you didn't quite know what to do, or if there was anything you could do about it.

Why Should I Get Involved?

Because getting involved helps prevent sexual assault in a culture that too often inadvertently supports it. Because a little thing you do to check in with someone else could be the big thing that saved them a lot of trauma. And because sexual assault is everyone's problem.

Sexual violence occurs on a spectrum, from seemingly harmless cat calls directed at women on the street, to date and acquaintance rape, to gang rape at gunpoint. When we don't speak up, we support a culture that lets perpetrators get away with it (which they do, disturbingly often).

Think of your sister, your mom, your girlfriend, or one of your good friends in a sexually violent situation. What if someone watched or knew it was happening and did nothing to stop it? How would you feel? Do you want to be that kind of person?

Getting involved doesn't have to be (and ideally shouldn't be) a big production.

Small interventions can make a big difference in a questionable situation. Just distracting someone, saying something, checking in with a person can stop the momentum of something bad.

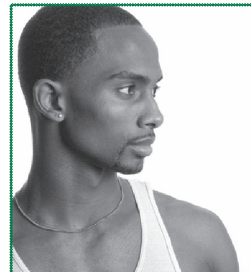
And if it wasn't going that direction in the first place, it's certainly not going to have hurt to check in.

Of course, it can be a little embarrassing to intervene. You might tell yourself that you're overreacting, or that it's not your business. You might also fear that you are the only one who will speak up or that you'll end up in a fight.

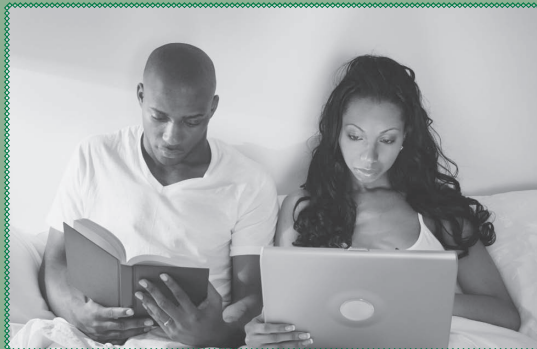
On the other hand, who wouldn't be willing to be a little embarrassed, knowing that someone cared enough to check on them? And chances are that there are more guys (and girls) out there than you know who feel the same. It takes some character, sure, and some guts to be the kind of person who will intervene. But at least you've started the conversation. All it takes is one person.

What can I do?

- *Speak up if someone's putting down women.*
- *Accompany female friends to parties and pair up to keep an eye on each other.*
- *Remind your friends to hold their drink at all times (or constantly use a fresh one) and make sure no one slips something into it.*
- *Offer to drive your friend(s) home from a party.*
- *To defuse a potential situation, distract the couple or take one person aside.*
- *Track down a friend of one of the people and have them check on their friend.*
- *Talk to the girl at some point and let her know you saw what was going on and that you're willing to help her.*
- *Knock on or open the door and ask if everything's cool. Interrupting an okay scene is better than standing around while a rape takes place.*



- *Believe your friend.*
- *Tell your friend that she/he is not to blame for the assault.*
- *Ask before touching the victim.*
- *Don't pressure your friend to give details; allow the victim to talk at her/his own pace.*
- *Remember: your supportive response will help the victim to deal with the trauma of the abuse.*
- *Threats of force or shows of anger usually do not support the healing process.*
- *Urge your friend to get medical assistance.*
- *Call a sexual assault crisis center if you have questions or need support for yourself.*



**LOUISIANA
FOUNDATION
AGAINST SEXUAL
ASSAULT**

1250 S.W. Railroad Ave, Suite 170
Hammond, La 70403
Phone (985) 345-5995
Fax (985)345-5592
Toll Free Information Line:
(888) 995-7273
www.lafasa.org

Sexual Assault Crisis Centers
provide:

- A 24-hour crisis hotline
- Information and referral
- Free counseling
- And more...

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Guy's Guide to Getting Involved

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